PRICE ONE PENNY.] **CRICKETERS AND SOLDIERS TOO—WITH PORTRAITS.**

# CHUMS

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"HANDS UP, OR YOU'RE DEAD MEN!" (*See page* 578).

## THAT TREACHEROUS CAMP FIRE.

### Why I am No Longer Called "Boy."

By Arthur Rigby, *Author of "Witnessed by One," etc.*

"A CAMP fire! We're home! Thank heaven, we're safe!"

In my great joy I squeezed my brother's arm and gave a great cry. We had been cut off from our company in the middle of a rain-drenched night, and had wandered about for three pitiless hours, never knowing when we were going to ride into a Boer trench or a Free State barbed-wire catcher.

Joe was nearly as excited as I was, only he had a way of keeping it close. Like a man of forty Joe is—that's how he got into the Scouts, that and his knowledge of the veldt; and as he wouldn't part from me they enlisted me too, though they called me "boy," and "kid," and "youngster," while Joe they called Jervis, as if he was a man.

The glow of the fire must have brightened up our fagged horses, for they broke into a canter. As we got closer we could see figures squatting round the fire.

"I wonder if there's any supper left for us, Joe."

"Supper? Breakfast, you mean, Harry. It'll be light in an hour or—— Eh?"

The exclamation was jerked out in answer to the crack of a rifle.

"They think we're Boers," I cried. "Hi! You chaps! We're British scouts!"

A loud guffaw and a rifle crack was the answer.

"*They* are Boers!" cried Jo. "Cut for it, Harry!"

Our horses had smelt danger, and wheeled in double-quick time.

"Duck!" cried Joe.

"Crack! crack! crack!"

We lay almost flat along our horses. We knew the Boers wouldn't shoot our mounts if they could help it, they were getting too hard up for horses for that; so we gave the animals the rein and dashed into the dreary night again.

There were no more rifle shots, and I began to hope that the enemy had lost us when my mare gave a little whinny, sure sign that horses were in pursuit.

"They're after us," said Joe. "I hoped their ponies weren't handy. But they always are, worse luck."

"And fresh, too," I added, thinking of my own tired beast.

"There's one chap of the three I recognised," said Joe. "Schimell."

"The fellow who threatened to shoot us because we wouldn't show him where old Shepherd hid his stock of rifles?"

"If we're caught, Harry, Schimell will shoot us down."

"They'll catch us if they try," I moaned. "My mare's getting beat."

"Pull up," said Joe quietly. "No noise, now. It's our only chance. Follow me!"

He dismounted, and, with the bridle on his arm, started off at a quick walk at right angles to the direction in which we had been galloping.

"They'll spread out a lot," he whispered, "especially after they lose the sound of our horses. "If we only come across one of the brutes, we'll tackle him. If we meet two, we'll have a jolly good try to do ditto. If we run against the three"—Joe reached for my hand, found it in the darkness, and wrung it—"we'll do our best, old man."

### II.

We walked quickly, ears alert, pistols ready, but, though we listened as people can when they are listening for their lives, we heard no further sound of pursuit.

The night was black, and there was no sign of the coming day. The veldt, so far, had been fairly regular and easy, offering no more serious obstacles than stunted trees and small bushes; but of a sudden I tripped over a tidy-sized stone and sprawled full length among others—a sign, I knew, that we were nearing the hills.

My good mare stood where I fell, and Joe, who was leading, kept on, suspecting nothing.

Afraid to call for fear of revealing our presence and fearful of losing Joe in the darkness, I scrambled to my feet and scampered after him. But I hadn't gone very far before I saw a horse loom big before me.

Where was Joe?

I pulled in my mare and held my breath. Something told me that in our short separation some untoward accident had befallen my brave brother. But what?

I crept up to the horse. Yes, it was Joe's. I crept around it. There was no Joe. I peered ahead, behind, on all sides. There was no trace of dear old Joe.

Should I call him?

I was about to follow my impulse when I thought I heard a snake-like movement almost at my heels.

Swinging round, I saw something pop up from the long, straggling grass. As it shot upward I knew it was a hand; the next instant it had taken a firm grip of my ankle, and was jerking my foot from beneath me.

My revolver was in my hand, my finger upon the trigger. As I reeled towards the earth I turned the barrel of my pistol down to where, from the position of the visible hand and arm, the invisible body must have been.

"Don't speak, Harry!"

It was Joe's hoarse whisper—the voice of my brother Joe! And in another breath I should have shot him dead!

I fell limp beside him, hot as fever, trembling like a leaf.

His mouth crept close to my ear.

"We've almost run into a Boer outpost. Listen! Do you hear their voices? They're coming closer. If our horses move, we're done!"

My mare was feeding; I could hear that, and I knew she would keep moving forward. I crept along noiselessly in the grass and slipped my fingers over the hanging rein, pulling it taut.

"Where are Schimell and his commando of two to-night? This is the first night they have missed running or driving in one or two English prisoners for quite a fortnight. Have those thick-headed British bullies actually discovered at last that Schimell's camp fire is only a cunning snare?"

From the clearness of the voice (I understood the Dutch lingo perfectly) the speaker was dangerously near, and the laughter of his companions told me that they were actually walking in our direction.

"I expected a few of the pigs here by now," returned a second voice. "Didn't you hear three rifles fire a little while back? They were the guns of Schimell's party, I'll swear."

"Then we shall have some more British soldiers to entrain for Pretoria to-morrow. Schimell's rifle never speaks till he knows what he's doing. Hullo! Is that a horse moving yonder?"

They had found us. We were lost. My mare, since I had caught her bridle, had stood like a statue, but Joe's horse had forgotten himself and begun to prance about.

"Mount, Harry! It's cut or nothing!"

As he spoke Joe dashed past me. In an instant he was in his saddle, and I in mine.

"The enemy!" cried the Boers in one voice.

"Ride for your life, Harry. Keep wide of me, and lie low."

The first bullet spat past my cheek. A hand fell heavily upon my leg.

"You are my prisoner. Haul up, or I'll shoot you down!" panted the Boer in English.

I saw his rifle barrel gleam as he threw it, one-handed, to his shoulder. With all my strength I kicked out with the leg he held. The man fell back a pace, but kept his grip of me, and all but pulled me out of the saddle.

A horse's flank flashed past my mare's head. Crack! went Joe's revolver. The man's hand fell off my leg. I dug in my spurs. Spat! spat! spat! sang three bullets on either side of my ears.

"Come on!" roared Joe.

### III.

It was all the work of a bustling, exciting, terrifying minute, in which Joe kept his head and I lost mine. Then we were off into the all-enveloping darkness again, chased by an occasional pot-shot from a Boer Mauser.

"If they'd been mounted we'd have been taken—or shot," said Joe.

"You heard what they said about Schimell's snare, Joe?"

"Rather. That explains how we've lost two or three chaps every night lately when the Scouts have been out. Our fellows have taken it for their own camp fire."

"They're all at Pretoria now."

"Yes."

"With more to follow."

"Who said so?"

Joe's retort was brusque, almost savage. He pulled in his horse, and peered ahead into the darkness.

"Harry," he said presently, "I know now where the Boer camp is, and where our camp is. I could find Schimell's bonfire with my eyes shut. From there I could trek back to camp blindfold."

"Well?" I queried.

"Don't you speak another word until *I* speak. Then you can shout. But until then, not one word. Shadow me close—do as I do, Harry—and remember that it's easier for us to see a bonfire than for them as sits round it to see us. Mum's the word. Follow!"

I saw now what rash move was in Joe's mind. There was no love lost between Schimell and us (we used to know him in Johannesburg before the war broke out), and Joe and he had several scores on the slate.

But would Joe succeed? If not—we should both be shot.

We soon came in sight of the artful fire, and for half an hour we rode steadily across the storm-sodden veldt, ever getting nearer to Schimell and his companions, yet never in a straight line. Now we faced one side of the fire, now another. As constantly as the figures that showed black and clumsy against the glow shifted their positions so did we shift our course. Always riding as nearly as possible towards their backs, we slowly and warily approached.

Schimell himself was humming a drowsy chant (we knew it well); the merest hum it was, yet on the silence of the night and our screwed-up nerves it served as a chorus.

Why wouldn't they go to sleep and give us a better chance? I wanted to put the question to Joe, but dared not. *Dared not!* Only fear of my brother's anger kept me from speaking. Speaking, did I say? Shrieking!

That was it. I wanted to shriek. My throat was aching to shriek. One shriek, and I felt that I could have galloped towards the fire and shot down the three Boers as they jumped up, single-handed. But I dared not. And the nearer we drew to the dancing fire and the plainer grew the figures of the three men drawn around it, with their ponies tethered near, the stronger grew my delirious desire to shriek, to yell, to ease the tension of mind and break the eerie spell that hung upon the blackness of the night, our stealthy movements, and the wide, lone veldt.

But Joe was creeping stealthily on before me, and fear of his anger kept me dumb.

Moreover, the fire was so near that we could see every movement of the three Boers, drinking and smoking, innocent of their danger. If a movement of ours drew even the suspicion of Schimell upon us, we were dead boys.

Suddenly Joe raised his hand. Carefully as possible I drew level with him. He pointed straight at the fire, and turned his horse's head. I followed.

Forward now, straight ahead. Slowly, oh so slowly, and the horses treading cunningly along, picking their steps like a Cape Town lady crossing a muddy road.

We were looking straight at the three Boers now, right down into their unkempt faces.

One of them raised his head, sniffed into the air like a dog, and stretched out his hand for his rifle.

The fire was between us and him; he could not see us. And he felt for his rifle with his right hand, forgetful that he had laid it down on the other side of him.

"Hands up, or you're dead men!"

Joe spurred his horse up to the fire, revolver covering two. I was level with him in an instant with my pistol, taking stock of number three.

"Who are you?" came the growling inquiry, as the three pairs of hands went up into the air.

"Who are we, Piet Schimell? Why, Joe and Harry Jervis, from Johannesburg way. You are our prisoners—alive or dead, as you please. Stand up and keep your hands up. The game's with us."

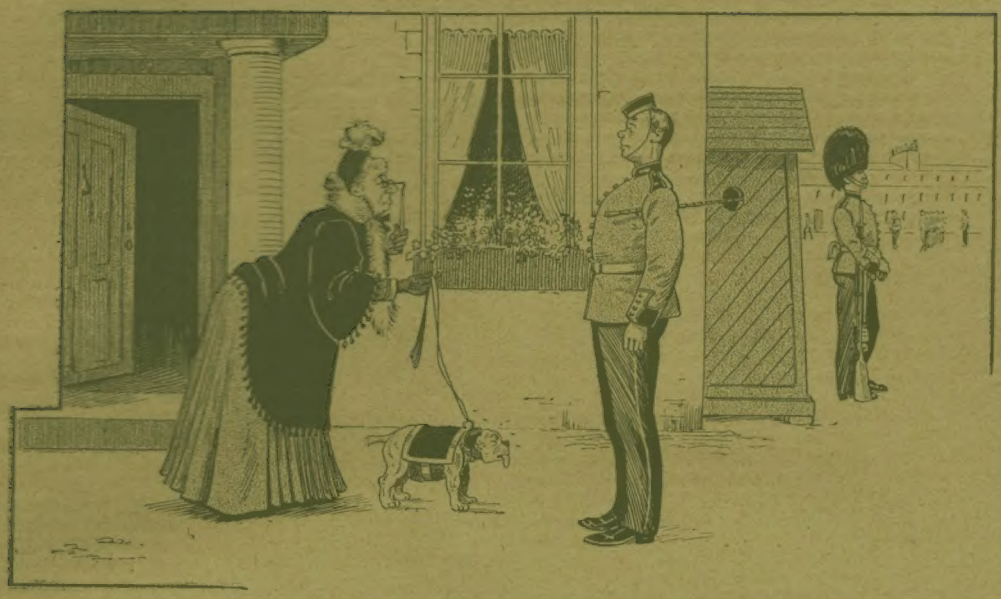
Two of the men stood up. Schimell sat where he was, his hands slowly dropping towards his rifle.

Joe fired. The bullet missed Schimell's cheek by an inch. The man leapt up as if shot.

"You fiend!" he cried.

"Five chambers loaded yet," said Joe. "Step three paces forward, all of you."

## Merely a Little Oversight.



*Colonel's Wife:* "ATKINS, I WANT YOU TO TAKE DEAR FIDO OUT FOR AN AIRING. NOW DO BE VERY CAREFUL OF HIM. TIE THIS RIBBON ROUND YOUR WRIST, SO THAT HE CAN'T RUN AWAY."

They obeyed.

"Now sit down in a heap."

They did that, too.

"Harry, collect their rifles. I've got them all covered. The morning's breaking, I see. Soon as it's light enough to see our way without risk of losing one another, we'll all walk into camp."

We marched our three prisoners into camp at daybreak, and such a scene there was you never saw. But the Scouts have reported fewer men "missing" ever since.

N.B. I am no longer called "boy" or "kid." No fear! It's Harry Jervis now.

### Made a Difference.

IN a provincial school recently an inspector who was examining a class of boys in arithmetic, wishing to test their knowledge of fractions, asked a lad whether, supposing he got his choice, he would prefer to take a sixth or a seventh part of an orange.

"A seventh," promptly replied the boy.

The inspector frowned, and forthwith proceeded to explain at great length, and with many illustrations, the relative values of a sixth and a seventh, declaring, with a shake of the head, that the boy who would choose the smaller part, as this boy had done, because it looked the larger fraction, was "very, very foolish."

Scarcely, however, had he concluded his harangue when the voice of the urchin, who had been manifesting signs of impatience, broke in:

"But, please, sir, I don't like oranges."

"TO SALUTE THE OFFICERS." BUT HE FORGOT THAT POOR FIDO WAS ATTACHED TO HIS WRIST

### Was He Engaged?

A GOLF caddie tried in vain to get engaged to carry the clubs of a pompous player. When it was his turn to play, the latter placed the ball carefully, threw himself into position, swung his club like a long hammer, and—missed.

The rejected caddie laughed joyfully.

Once more the novice drove and missed, and the caddie's laughter became uproarious. At the third try the ball was dislodged from its perch and spun over the turf about six feet.

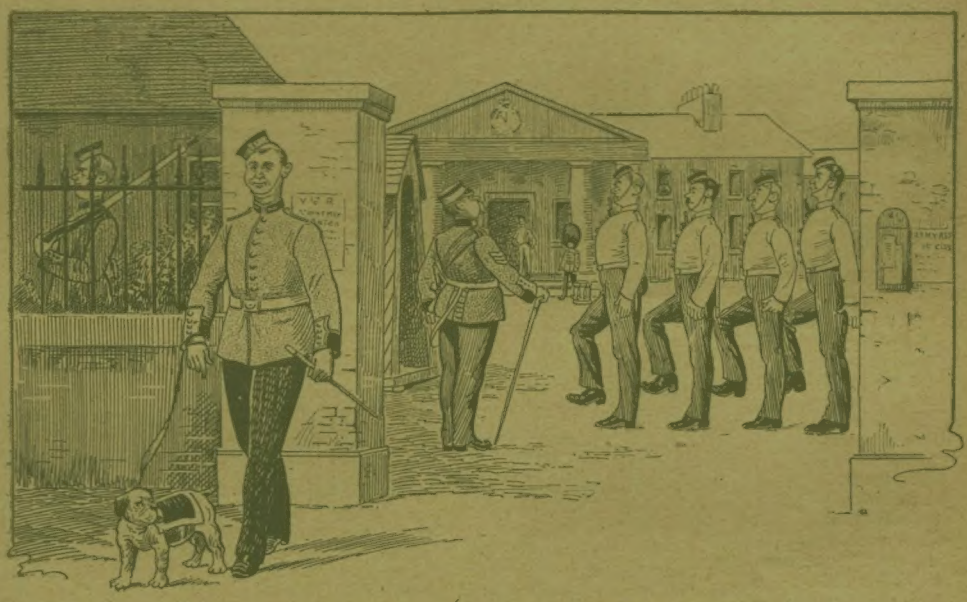
"Hi, sir," yelled the caddie derisively, "I'll carry your clubs for the fun o' the thing!"

### Weighed on the Scales.

A WESTERN justice of the peace once had a case that puzzled him not a little. An Indian who had been arrested for breaking into a cabin and stealing a pair of old breeches, was formally charged with burglary. The old justice took all the testimony down in writing, as he is required to do by law, and as it was very conflicting in character he was in a quandary.

Two or three witnesses had testified positively to the fact that the Indian had been in the immediate vicinity on the day of the theft, others that they had seen the breeches in his possession, while several others swore just as positively that he was in a different part of the country when the crime was committed.

After reading the evidence, the justice announced that he would take the case under consideration till the next day.



"WELL, THIS IS A LOT BETTER THAN DRILLING! NOTHING TO DO EXCEPT——"

When the time came for deciding the matter the old justice took his seat at his desk, and at length announced:

"The law makes it my duty to weigh the evidence for and against the accused, and to decide according to which is the more ponderous."

He then produced a pair of scales, and placing the written evidence against the accused in one pan and the evidence in his favour in the other, announced, as the pan containing the incriminating evidence went down:

"The weight of evidence is against the accused. He is held to answer before the Superior Court for the crime of burglary, with bail fixed at a hundred dollars."

The superstitious Indian thought the pair of scales was a contrivance for getting at the truth, and when they decided against him he confessed.

"You see, boys," said the scientific lecturer, "that two and two always make four, and nothing else."

"Oh, yes, they do," cried one youngster; "they sometimes make twenty-two."

FIRST POLAR BEAR: "What are these men doing round here?"

Second Polar Bear: "Looking for the North Pole, I hear."

First Polar Bear: "Oh! I thought perhaps they might be trying to get us for a menagerie."

# FOUGHT OUT AT THE FRONT.

**Being a Written Account of a Terrible Chapter in the Life of Jack Scarlett, and the Adventures and Misadventures which befel him in the Troublous Times of the South African War of 1899 and 1900.**

**By E. C. HEATH HOSKEN,**
AUTHOR OF "BROKEN THREADS," "FOXE OF CAIUS," ETC. ETC.

SYNOPSIS—CHAPTERS I.—IV.—

AT a few days' notice Jack Scarlett, of Winchester School, is sent by his uncle, Phineas Baldwin, to South Africa on a secret mission to Meinheer Van Kock, to whom Jack is to hand a sealed letter. On reaching Durban just as the newspapers announce that war has broken out, Jack is directed by a repulsive little Zulu, who has apparently been expecting him, to the Wellington Hotel, where Van Kock, a sinister-looking Dutchman, receives him in a private room. After tearing up the letter into minute pieces, Van Kock starts with Jack for Pretoria. Ladysmith is reached late in the evening, and during the night the little Zulu clambers through Jack's window and attempts to murder him. Failing in this, he escapes the way he came. Immediately afterwards the Dutchman opens the door and calls "Bull-frog!" Jack explains what has happened, and Van Kock, in an angry mood, retires, locking the door. Seizing his kit-bag, Jack hastily drops out of the window and commences to run.

## CHAPTER V.

### A STRANGE MEETING.

THE dawn was breaking over the rugged Drakensberg mountains and the table-topped Pepworth Hill to the north.

I had not gone far before I met a guard of khaki-clad soldiers. Fine strapping men they looked, and for the moment I forgot my petty personality as I watched them.

Evidently someone was up and about; and then I remembered vaguely that there were a garrison and permanent camp at Ladysmith—or, to be correct, a couple of miles out of the actual township.

I did not know at the time, for I was lamentably behindhand with my news, that Sir George White with ten thousand British soldiers were over there a mile away, ready and waiting to fight for Queen and country. I did not know that negotiations were practically closed between Great Britain and President Kruger, and that armed Boers were already encroaching on, and in some instances had crossed, the Natalian borders at the north.

But it was not to be long before I had a rude awakening.

The red cloud of War was hovering on the horizon, though I knew it not; already the aasvogels (vultures) were darkening the sky, for they scented blood.

To-day there was peace; to-morrow the dogs of war were to be loosed, and blood, wounds and battles were to clash throughout this fair Natal and stain its rolling veldt with the blood of brave men.

Over there in the purple mist, through which a chrome-coloured moon faded slowly before the coming dawn, the silver-throated British bugles rang out the reveillé.

Yes, I was in a camp.

I soon met some Kaffirs going to work, and then a team of oxen led by a little wiry native boy, while from the waggon a bearded Boer cracked his sjambok (hide-whip) with a sound like the report of cannon. Then I passed a motionless sentry—a grim figure in khaki tunic breeches and puttees, who, for some reason, came promptly to attention as I passed. Did he think I was a subaltern? I felt flattered, and returned his salute gravely.

The country opened now, and I could see the vast stretch of rolling veldt—that African veldt of which I had heard so much. It rolled away there in giant waves, broken only by the red ant-hills and a few isolated rocky kopjes, to the foot of the purple hills—limitless, grand.

I stood and gazed at the vanishing mists. It was indeed, a sight to take one's breath away—the dawning of the day on the yellow desert Karroo!

"HE WAS DOWN FROM HIS LOFTY PERCH IN AN INSTANT."

But I was not allowed to soliloquise for long, for the smart ring of horses' hoofs and the rumble of wheels behind me made me swing round.

From the direction in which I had just come (and which I afterwards learnt was Ladysmith itself) was a Cape cart with two lean yet muscular-looking horses, driven tandem-wise, stepping it out right finely.

The cart had two occupants—a black man, in a monstrosity of a hat, and a white man.

They were up to me in less than a minute, and, as they approached, my eyes fell on the young Englishman who was driving.

He was whistling the "*Dulce Domum*"—our old school song.

I reeled backwards, and my kit-bag almost dropped from my nerveless hand.

Was I mad? That tune and—that face! Could it be possible?

"*Gilly!*" I cried. "Gilly—or—his ghost!"

Up came the leader on his haunches; and then I saw it was none other than my old chum, Giles Morant!

"By Saint William of Wykeham, where are we? Am I off my head?" he cried.

"Gilly!" I gasped, and ran forward.

He was down from his lofty perch in an instant and gripping my hand as if he meant to crush it to pulp.

"Jack Scarlett! Jack! By all that's wonderful! Jack alone on the veldt—with his bag and his inane grin! *Jack!* Are you a disembodied Jack, or is this fleshly hand the corporeal paw of the real and only Jack? Well, I'm hanged! I'm hanged!"

Never was there such a coincidence!

It was Gilly Morant, the very man I had been thinking about a minute before; the very man I most wanted, too.

I was speechless. I simply wrung his honest hand and laughed absurdly, roared with laughter, and he laughed, too. Then the grinning absurdity on the box showed his ivory teeth and bellowed with Basutian laughter. We all three laughed.

It was really with me a tragic moment, and yet I laughed.

An orderly galloped by and turned in his saddle as he passed; he probably thought we were three inmates of Bedlam let loose.

The horses pawed the ground and champed their bits. They were fresh; as a matter of fact, they had been saved for a fifty mile ride.

"How did you get here? Where, in the name of goodness, did you spring from? In Ladysmith, and at this time? Man alive, don't stare at me like a grinning ape! Answer, I say!"

A dozen questions did he ply me with, until I stopped him, for a flash of what had passed and my own great danger came into my excited mind.

"Gilly," said I, "it's serious, and, 'pon my soul, it seems as if Fate had sent you to me."

"Fate has a precious lot to do with it," he said. "But I'm going to have more. Look here, I'm off with Injujuba, commonly called or known as Jujube—nice chap, Jujubo"; he jerked his finger in the direction of the Basuto boy.

"We're off to Moutifontein. They're in an awful mess out there. Boers over the border. Infernal cheek of the ruffians! They're raiding like a pack of Swazis on the warpath. It's war, Jack, red war, I tell you! What my poor people are going to do, I am sure I don't know. They are in a frightful funk, I can tell you. Moutifontein's just a mile from the Transvaal border, you know!"

I listened, gaping, open-mouthed.

"My brother Dick is out here with White. He's in the Dublin Fusiliers, you know. Heaven knows what's going to happen!"

"But I—I don't understand," I stammered. "Has it got as bad as that?"

"Bad? Couldn't be worse, Jack! Railway communication is stopped beyond Danhauser, a few miles to the north of Glencoe Junction. Symons is up there at Dundee with his column. It's *War*, I tell you, sure as fate!"

"But what are you going to do now?" I asked, for I was beginning to get a little nervous, and could not help casting my eye in the direction of the station, fearing lest I should espy the dreaded form of Heer Van Kock.

"I!—oh, I'm going back to the pater with the news. They'll have to trek in double quick time, I can tell you. The pater's up there, blissfully sanguine, swearing that nothing will happen, that Oom Paul won't dare to show fight. All rot, I say. I shouldn't be surprised if there's bloodshed to-day. This looks like it, at any rate, doesn't it?" He pointed away to the great camp.

I stared at him speechlessly.

"But haven't you heard the news?" he cried.

"News! I've heard a lot of wild rumours," I replied. "But I'd no idea it was as bad as this."

I must confess that I had a lamentable ignorance as to contemporary history, and my knowledge of the recent stirring affairs in the Transvaal was about as limited as it very well could be.

"But, how came you here? I am forgetting. Speak, man, and don't keep me any longer in suspense!" exclaimed Gilly.

And in a few words I told him all there was to be told; for I cared nothing for the bond of secrecy now. I was desperate.

Gilly looked very grave.

"There's only one thing, Jack, old man," said he, "and that is for you to come along with Jujube and me to Moutifontein."

My face flushed with excitement.

"But is there room?"

"Room! We'll soon make it. Hi, you sinner!" he shouted to the puzzled Basuto; "get up behind and make room for Mr. Scarlett. He is my friend, Jujube; therefore he is yours."

"The baas can trust me," said the fellow, raising his tiny hat.

"Now then, up you get, my Jacko, and we'll be off."

Like a tale that is told, it all comes back to me—unreal, and yet so terribly real withal.

The day had dawned and the sun was mounting into the blue vault of the heavens.

With a crack of the whip we were off. Ladysmith township was soon far behind; Sir George White's camp disappeared and the blue Drakensberg grew more and more distinct.

A great throb of hope filled me. I felt that with the aid of Gilly I feared nothing.

## CHAPTER VI.

### FOLLOWED!

Around us was the vast ocean of dun-coloured veldt, stretching away limitless and free like the real ocean I had so recently crossed, stretching away in varied shades and tints to the pearly horizon now bathed in blue mists which were lifting from the distant mountain range. And across the vast rolling expanse, like a silver serpent, the straight white road to the Buffalo zigzagged northward until it disappeared around a stony kopje, reappeared again for another inch, and then faded away altogether with the purple mists.

It was altogether a curious and strangely beautiful sight, and one which particularly appealed to me because the like of it I had never before seen. I did not at the time fully appreciate its subtle charm. I have since learnt to love it and to know that there is no place for me in the wide world to compare with the great stony, grassy deserts of South Africa.

Not once but many times did I turn and look at Gilly in admiration.

My old chum had changed wonderfully in the comparatively short space of time he had been absent from England. He was a man now, and I felt myself still a boy.

When I had last seen him he had been racking his brain over conic sections and Greek verse. Now I found him driving a Cape cart, with bronzed, weather-beaten face and eagle eye, alert for any danger.

To know my dear old chum, Gilly Morant, was to love him. There never lived a truer friend, a gayer companion or a braver man. Up for any fun, ever ready for adventure, he was just the sort of companion one would choose for a tight hole or a good bit of fun. Yes, a dashing handsome youth he was, though a bit scatter-brained and headstrong at times, and he had a temper of his own; but perhaps that only made him the more lovable.

We must have driven about ten miles when I observed the Basuto boy anxiously moving about on the back seat. He was giving vent to grunts and expressions in, to me, an utterly unknown tongue. Evidently something was wrong with Injujuba, the son of Tarknow, the grand-nephew of Leothoridi of the Basutos, for such was his full name, style, and title.

He was a strangely incongruous object to behold. He had not at all an unpleasant face and he looked you full in the eyes and did not flinch—a good sign, I have since learnt. He was a man of about thirty summers and his complexion was a rich coal black, his teeth were as white as ivory, and the whites of his eyes as white as his teeth. He had a typical Basuto face, a trifle heavy, thick jowled and pendulous of cheek and lip. It was not the clean-cut, bullet head of the Amazulu or Matabele, but it was fine in its way, and perhaps a little more intelligent.

But the fellow's get-up was what particularly amused me. On the top of his woolly crown perched a ridiculously small silk hat with the nap brushed scrupulously the wrong way. It was a wonder to me how on earth the fellow managed so well to balance the tiny hat on his truly gigantic head.

His coat was, or, at a distant period of time, had it been of a rich buff; but age had told its tale, and now resembled the historic garment of Joseph. Every button was there still, though they were all different, brass, bone, cloth, silver. A fearful and a wonderful collection.

Gilly told me the coat had once been the property of none other than a deceased coachman of his Excellency the High Commissioner.

Jujube's muscular legs—and he stood quite six feet in his socks, which, of course, he never wore—were clothed respectably in an ancient pair of broadcloth, which the ingenuity of the Basutian mind had decorated with two stripes of official red tape, to resemble, no doubt, the British soldier.

Of boots his great feet knew nothing, but he wore a Highlander's spats to make up for the deficiency. They badly wanted pipeclay.

To complete his toilet he wore around his waist a kilt—a quite superfluous piece of personal furniture. The kilt was of the tartan of the gallant Seaforth Highlanders.

"You know these chaps are excellent servants," whispered Gilly; "but you've got to let 'em have their own way. Old Jujube comes out in a different rig-out every day. But, by George, you should see him on Sundays!" And Gilly began to laugh uproariously.

But Jujube was, as I have said, strangely agitated.

"Your servant is evidently upset," I remarked. And Gilly looked around, suddenly serious again.

"Hullo. What's up?"

"I hear horse," said the Basuto with preternatural solemnity. "Horse following us, baas!"

"And so do I, by Jove. Listen, Jack! The chap's right, as he always is. He's got the ears of a fox."

And, sure enough, from behind us came the dull, muffled sound of horses at the gallop.

"Hear 'em?" asked Gilly, as he flicked his whip. "That's the sound Jujube hates. He can't bear being followed. It goes against his grain."

I felt my skin tingle. I was thinking of Heer Van Kock.

"Seriously," I said, "do you contemplate difficulty? I—I mean, do you think there are any Boers about here?"

Gilly laughed lightly.

"Not here, old man; but there may be some later on. We aren't home yet, by a very long chalk. I don't suppose they're following us, unless—— I wonder if *that's* it? Do you think that that chap Van Kock would follow you?"

He had voiced my thoughts.

"I'm afraid to think," I answered quietly.

"Well, we'll give him a warm reception if he tries any little game of that sort on," said Gilly grimly. "Hi, Jujube, bring out the Express, and that spare revolver, with fifty rounds. You never know your luck."

The Basuto needed no second orders. His fighting instinct was at fever heat. He had seen the British soldiers at Ladysmith and he had heard the various rumours, he had had several conversations with his fellow tribesmen, and he knew that war was in the air. That was enough for him. He was all suspicion.

He unlatched the box beneath his seat—he was sitting behind—and extracted a revolver, an Express rifle, and a bandolier full of ammunition. Then it was that I saw that both the Basuto and Gilly wore bandoliers around their chests, and had pistols rammed in their leather belts.

Gilly handed me the revolver, a smart and dangerous-looking weapon.

"I hope you won't have to use it, old fellow," he said. "But, 'pon my soul, you never know what's going to turn up; and we may as well be prepared. What with Joubert massing thousands at Laing's Nek and, if rumour be true, about Newcastle, the Boers are already in Natal."

I tried to smile; but the truth was, I was beginning to feel a bit funky. I took the revolver, and thought how very heavy it was.

The sound of the horses behind us seemed to die away, and we drove on and for the time forgot about them—at least, it seemed that both Gilly and the Basuto did, though I, for my part, kept harking back to that dreaded sound. Was I being followed? That was the question. It was an unpleasant idea, and I felt that I had no inclination for a fight for my life with either Van Kock or that unutterably loathsome creature I called Bull-frog.

"It'll be beastly awkward for my old governor," said Gilly after a brief spell of silence, as he whipped up the lagging horse. "He's hated by the Dutch in these parts, you know, principally because he was a soldier, I suppose. They hate the British like they hate water. But, I say, you aren't funking it, old man?" he broke in suddenly. "You're beastly quiet!"

"Funking?" I cried scornfully and a little angrily. "What are you talking about? I'm ready for anything as long as it's in the open—and Heer Van Kock and the Bull-frog, for all I care!"

Evidently the Basuto overheard this last remark, for he grew visibly excited again and half rose in his seat.

"Bull-frog! Bull-frog?" he exclaimed, waving his black hands in a variety of extraordinary motions over his head.

"Well, Jujube, what's up now?" asked Gilly in surprise.

## OUR PUZZLES.

No. 1.

Concerning what regiment taking part in the present War can it be said that any one man is equal to more than a hundred, but if two of them are placed together and one knocked backward with his head down, the two are only equal to six?

No. 2.

When properly arranged, the initials of the names of the objects represented above will form the name of a well-known British general.

[Drawn by A. Dale, 69a, Constitution Road, Dundee, to whom a Solid Silver Pencil-Case has been forwarded.]

Answers to Puzzles in No. 398.

No. 1.—"It is too late to complain when the thing is done."

No. 2.—"Witnessed by One"—"Pursued by Three."

"The Bull-frog?" cried the Basuto; "ah, it's the Evil Spirit of the woods and the veldt, of the mountains and the Karroo. Dark! Ugly—ugh! so ugly, and black as night with the red eye. Yes, I know him, I knows him!"

Gilly looked at me and I looked at Gilly.

"What does the fellow mean?" I asked breathlessly, for I was fascinated by the man's strange behaviour.

Gilly shrugged his shoulders.

"You mustn't take any notice of the natives, old man," he laughed. "They are very superstitious, and Jujube is the worst of the lot. He'll get on your nerves if you bother him. Let him talk his rot till he's tired, and leave him alone."

I shuddered involuntarily, and then, as we galloped along the Vryheid Road at a good spanking fifteen miles an hour (for the road was as level as any English coach road just here), we talked of other things, of the old school, and of the stirring affairs in fair Natalia.

Jujube too, with his round face and ivory teeth, was quieter and sat smoking meditatively his pipe of Boer tobacco, and ever and anon cocking his eye around and on all sides for any sign of the enemy he felt to be lurking near us.

My watch showed the time to be ten o'clock, and the sun was beating down pitilessly from the great dazzling blue vault of the sky. We must have travelled some thirty miles over the great desert Karroo and veldt, and we had not met a single soul, save one or two natives and a patrol of Natal Policemen, sturdy Britishers as ever wore her Majesty's uniform.

At ten, as I say, we outspanned at a little village of iron houses and orange trees, and there ate a meal while our trusty steeds did justice to the hay and muddy water which were laid before them by the Basuto groom.

"I wish we could stay here until the heat of the sun is gone down," said Gilly with a significant look at the somewhat jaded horses and then at the glittering sky, "but we ought not to waste time."

Jujube looked away down the road and then at the sky.

"We must go, baas," he said meaningly; "yes, we must go on!"

"So that settles it," laughed Gilly; and we started off again in the face of a blinding sun, with the red dust choking our lungs.

The ruts on the road were getting deeper, and the surrounding hills higher and more numerous.

On either side of us rolled the vast, undulating veldt. Away on the sky-line were some springbok (a kind of gazelle) grazing.

The silence was intense, and the jog-trot of the horses and the sun had a somnolent effect upon us all, so much so that I found myself dozing.

On and on, mile after mile, we went thus until, towards about three o'clock, the Basuto boy bestirred himself again and commenced a series of grunts and guttural exclamations.

I started up and turned to look at him. He was straining his eyes into the distance through the lingering cloud of red dust we had raised.

Gilly, too, turned.

"What's up, Jujube?" he asked drowsily, as he rubbed his heavy eyes and gave a sharp flick to the wheeler.

"Listen, baas!" said the Basuto, lifting a warning finger.

"Well?"

"Horse hoofs again, baas, coming faster and faster! Horse!"

A sudden thrill went through me again. Could it be that Van Kock was following me?

Jujube was certainly a most frightfully unnerving man.

But Gilly laughed a light, careless laugh.

"I believe old Jujube would scent danger a hundred miles away," he said; "though what danger there should be in the sound of somebody following us, I quite fail to see. But Jujube is always on the alert."

But, say what he might, the sound of horses' hoofs rang out clearly now: and, what was more, there were a good many of them. I could tell as much.

*(To be continued; commenced in No. 397.)*

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"Harry, here's an account of a man who lived forty-eight days on water."

"That's nothing. My father has been living on water for the last ten years."

"Do you expect me to believe that, eh? Why don't you add that he grew fat on it?"

"Well, he did. He's a sea captain."

### Decidedly Fruitful.

It is related that a settler in a Western town in the United States purchased a quantity of sugar at a grocer's, and found when he came to use it that it had been largely adulterated.

Thereupon he inserted the following advertisement in the principal newspaper of the place.

"Should the grocer who, for his profit, injudiciously mixed a pound of sand with a few pounds of sugar, and lately sold it to a customer, not send to that person at once the pound of sugar he cheated him of, his name shall be disclosed to the newspapers."

He affixed his name and address, and the morning on which it appeared had not passed before the advertisement bore fruit—or at least sugar. A pound arrived before noon, and was followed during the day by seven more, all from different sources.

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# BOYS AT THE POST OF DUTY.

## *Their Work, Their Play, Their Perils.*

### YOUTHFUL MESSENGERS' TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS.

WHEN a boy turns his back on school he may easily do much worse than jump into a uniform and straightway become a telegraph or a district messenger. In London—the case is different in the provinces generally—he can readily take such a step, because in both services the supply of assistance is unequal to the demand. The District Messengers' Company is always in want of lads, while at St. Martin's-le-Grand the authorities have lately had to employ men to deliver messages. "Boys! boys!" has been their cry, and response there has been none. And yet Post-Office work, and still more the varied duties that the smart-looking district messenger is called upon to perform, are peculiarly calculated to make a youth bright and energetic.

Perhaps the drawback to the telegraph service is the pay, which, however, varies considerably according to local conditions. Some boys get fixed wages, others so much per message. In the latter case each, on being given a telegram at the counter, receives a metal check. At night he hands the day's vouchers to a superintendent, who books them to his credit; and at the week end he is paid accordingly. One peculiarity of this system is that the number of checks seldom tallies with that of the messages sent out. A boy has a hole in his pocket, and that hole makes an awful muddle of his total. Or, again, he makes some nice experiments with a penny-in-the-slot machine. Then in some towns—Manchester is an instance—smart youths carry over checks from one week to the next. They want the pay day immediately preceding a holiday to be a bumper one; so they keep some of their work in hand for it, thus ensuring themselves as much pocket-money as possible for the occasion.

In certain places, too, nothing whatever is paid for delivering Press messages. If a boy goes "on the carpet"—which means making an involuntary appearance before the postmaster—to answer for some departmental offence and is found guilty, he is punished by being put on this gratuitous duty for a longer or shorter period.

Whether the work of the general messengers has any drawbacks I do not know. Judging from what Mr. Arthur Low, the manager of the District Messengers' Company, told me (writes a representative) I should say that it suits a sharp boy admirably. Mr. Low has no fewer than 570 lads under his control, and he would have another fifty if he could get them.

"We lay ourselves out to treat our boys well," said he. "We give them uniform and boots, provide them with a club and a gymnasium, keep a drum and fife band, and a refreshment canteen, where food, etc., is sold at cost price; allow them a half-yearly increase of salary, and every month we give a silver medal, as well as a money prize, to the boy in each branch whose conduct from all points of view — smartness, quickness on his messages, etc.—is best.

"The boys get all sorts of duties to perform. You've heard of that one?" and Mr. Low handed me a portrait of the immortal Jaggers, who, as most Chums will remember, travelled 8,000 miles in eighteen days. He took a letter from London to New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, and then brought back a reply, beating the post easily. "Mr. McCalmont sent a boy to California, and another gentleman despatched a dog in charge of one of our lads to the Sultan at Constantinople.

"Not long ago a boy was sent for to watch a corpse. Of course, we could not force one to do that. We asked one if he would go, and he said that he would—in fact, he was rather anxious to undertake the unpleasant job. So he went.

"On another occasion we supplied a boy to act as a corpse—at an ambulance meeting. He had to be treated as a dead body in full view of the audience.

"Once a boy looked after a lunatic all night. Frequently our lads go out as valets, go to load guns for shooting-parties, act as detectives, lead blind people about, shop for people living in the suburbs and in the provinces. The older boys often act as guides. At the end of the terms they meet a lot of children travelling home from school. Sometimes they meet them at Waterloo, take them to have something to eat, and then pack them off at King's Cross to York or elsewhere.

"A lady—a great cat fancier—living in Hampshire sends cats to all parts of the country. The lads meet them at Waterloo, and take them across London to the northern termini. Every letter she sends to us invariably contains this sentence: 'Please keep the cats out of the draught.'

"Here is another curious job. Not long ago a boy was sent by the newspaper train to a port in the West of England to redeem £50 worth of jewellery which had been pawned there.

"Now to-morrow is Stock Exchange settling day. Well, we shall have 250 boys employed by brokers in passing cheques among them."

What is the most distasteful duty one of the all-embracing boy messengers ever performed? It would be hard to say; but the "record" in this direction is probably held by a youth attached to the Piccadilly office. Answering a call, the lad found to his horror a perambulator with two occupants awaiting him. A lady instructed him to take the "dear little darlings" to the "Zoo," to show them the animals, and to pay all necessary expenses!

If messenger duty sometimes goes a little against the grain, at others it is as easy as it is agreeable. Several boys, for instance, have followed gentlemen on cycling tours, simply taking on their luggage from place to place—a perfectly delightful job alike as regards ease, change, and remunerativeness.

In consequence of the infinite variety of duties that fall to their lot, the London messenger boys are among the smartest youthful workers in the country. Entering all manner of households, from the duke's downwards, and seeing so much of the practical side of life, they become amazingly sharp and resourceful.

At least one gentleman has practically recognised that this sort of thing must benefit a boy. Although he is a prosperous West-End shopkeeper, he has placed two of his sons in the District Messenger service for a couple of years for the purpose of making them smart and alert. He regards the work of that service as a fine training for a lad.

Recently—this is a topical paragraph in conclusion—two of the District Messenger lads, Dahler and Jones by name, have embraced the profession of the sword. Selected by the Agent-General of the Cape Government as trumpeters in the Cape Mounted Rifles, they sailed for South Africa some weeks ago, about sixty comrades assembling at the head office and giving them a splendid "send-off."

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Master (to class in arithmetic): "John goes marketing. He buys two and a quarter pounds of sugar at threepence a pound, two dozen eggs at a shilling a dozen, and one pint of milk at a shilling a gallon. What does it all make?"

Smallest Boy (hesitatingly): "Custards."

## VELDT-SCOURING BY COLONIAL SCOUTS.

### To Find Out Where the Enemy Lurks.

BY this time even the very dullest Chum knows a good deal about warfare, so those of you who have been intelligently following the fighting will not need to be reminded that in this South African campaign efficient scouting is of the utmost importance. And, to-day, the scouts who are doing the most valuable work are those from the various colonies.

You see, they have this advantage over "Tommy," who has gone out from England: many of them know the country thoroughly, and even those from Australia, large numbers of whom have been doing police work in the bush, are soon at home on the veldt. Hardy, tough, dangerous fellows they are; splendid horsemen, able to scent the presence of the enemy as if by instinct, and deadly shots. "There are men in my troop," boasted one Colonial, "who can take a piece out of a kangaroo's ear at one thousand yards."

As a representative body of these fine irregulars, we will take a squadron of the "Colonial Scouts," as you see in the picture. This is a local force, raised in Natal, and how eager the men were to join may be judged from the fact that in ten days 513 applied to be admitted, and of these 198 brought their own horses. Affording us a change from the now almost universal khaki—one soldier has written home to say he shall be very glad to gaze on a red letter-box or a blue policeman once again—the Colonial Scouts wear brown corduroy, which, even in that country, the men declare to be very comfortable.

"We have to be careful, though," declared one scout, "for we are often mistaken for Boers, and it's not much use finding out, at the risk of your life, all about the enemy if your own people shoot you coming back." Scouts, however, above all folk, know how to take care of themselves. At Arundel, one of them is known to have picked off a dozen Boers, and they had never succeeded in discovering his position.

You will notice that the squadron shown in the illustration has the regimental pet with it, a smart little terrier, possessing, no doubt, a keen nose for Boers.

As you will know, not all the troops that do scouting work are dubbed "scouts." Some are termed So-and-So's Horse, after the name of their commander, Light Horse, Guides, and so forth. Rimington's Guides—the "Catch-'em-alive-o's," as they are called—we have heard much of, and with good reason, for ever since war broke out these tireless horsemen have been scouring South Africa night as well as day. A distinguishing badge that they wear is a narrow strip of fur bound round their slouch hats. Like most of the other scouts, their pay is 5*s.* a day, and their arms are carbines and revolvers. Major Rimington, their leader, is as fearless a soldier as ever faced the foe, and quite early in the war it was his boast that no Boer, however "slim" (wily), would be able to distinguish one of his officers from the men, so exactly were all equipped alike.

Many of these guides speak the Boer and Kaffir languages, and every man speaks one or the other. "So, when there's no work to be done, we can turn schoolmasters," said one of them jokingly. Needless to say, there always will be something to do for the Empire for such men as these.

The one complaint of all the scouts is that they do not get enough actual fighting. They are sent out to get into touch with the enemy, and to report on his strength, position, etc., and though shots are exchanged, it is the main body behind the scouts that does the bulk of the fighting. So that the position is like this: Say there are a dozen hungry boys in a class-room, and somewhere in the house there is a beautiful hot dinner ready. One boy is sent out to sniff along the corridors and passages till at last he scents out where the meal is. Then he goes back to tell the others instead of falling-to himself, and maybe only an odd morsel or two comes to his share. He, of course, is the scout.

When the time does come, however, the scout soon proves that he is a fighting man as well. Do you remember what happened at Labuschagne's Nek, near Dordrecht? An officer lay on the ground wounded, and, voluntarily, thirty of the Colonials remained all night with him to prevent his being captured. Around them swarmed six hundred Boers, who had with them a field gun, and yet, in spite of these great odds, the tiny force kept the foe at bay till daylight, when they were rescued. General Gatacre is not a commander who wastes words of praise, but this gallant feat induced him to specially congratulate the little band of heroes.

From Australia come the valuable contingents forming what is known as the Bushmen's Corps, some 1,100 or so strong. These are men of all classes, but all able to find their way with unerring instinct in the most difficult country, first-class riders, and crack shots. Some are private gentlemen with ample means of their own; others boast nothing but a love of hard work in the open air. At the riding tests, one man, preparing to tackle a "buck-jumper," was noticed to be attired in a frock coat. "Take your coat off!" the shouts of the onlookers advised. But the man declined to do so. He didn't possess a shirt!

All over Australasia, as at the Cape, in Canada, and at home, funds for the volunteers have been freely raised, and horses and equipment of all sorts bestowed upon the troops. To the Bushmen's Fund a racehorse named Bugler was presented. At the Adelaide Stock Exchange Bugler was put up to auction and sold for fifty guineas, and he was then patriotically resold again and again, and in the end he brought to the fund no less than £666 13*s.* 6*d.* "Nice little sum for a horse," was the comment.

If, as we have said, the scout suffers—that is how he puts it—from lack of opportunity for joining in the battle, he at least has splendid chances of being himself killed. Often he is miles and miles away from any considerable body of troops, and there is excitement enough to satisfy the most greedy when our men are gradually coming face to face with the scouts of the enemy, and it is a question of who has the better eyesight.

"Of course," says one scout, "it is a bit of a toss-up which side makes first 'find.' If you spot the enemy you pick him off, and the foe knows it is time to retreat. But often enough the warning that tells you you are 'in touch' is when the man working with you falls dead."

A SQUADRON OF COLONIAL SCOUTS.
*(From a Photograph.)*

### This Dog Wore Spectacles.

WE heard some years ago of a cow which walked with the aid of a wooden leg; and now we hear of a hunting dog which surveyed creation through a pair of spectacles.

As a hunter it was a dog of remarkable gifts, keen of scent, swift, and resourceful, and not in the least disturbed by the firing of guns.

It had but one defect, but that was a serious drawback—it was near-sighted.

In coursing it several times injured itself by running into trees and other objects, and when its master carried it to a veterinary surgeon the expert chaffingly suggested that the dog had better be furnished with glasses.

The dog's master took the advice seriously, and secured a pair of lenses which were ingeniously contrived for the dog's use.

The animal was at first very restless in its spectacles, and tried to pull them off; but gradually it became accustomed to the novelty, and may even have realised the great benefit which it obtained by wearing them.

They had, indeed, a remarkable effect upon its vision. It no longer collided with obstacles in its path when hunting, and its value as a courser was increased to a corresponding extent.

Sad to relate, the spectacles which had proved a source of such benefit led in the end to the animal's undoing. One day its master went to hunt boars in a wood, taking the dog with him. A fierce old boar having broken cover, the dog pursued it, but the boar stood its ground. In the tussle the dog's spectacles were broken, with the result that the pieces of glass went into its eyes, and, although it survived the combat, it became totally blind.

*Any reader who is willing to help in making "CHUMS" still more widely known should send a postcard or letter—addressed to "The Editor of 'CHUMS,' La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, London"—asking for some Specimen Numbers. A parcel of copies, for distribution among friends and others, will then be forwarded gratis and carriage paid.*

### They were Disappointed.

This curious incident about vultures comes from Burmah. There had been some sports, in which one of the events was what is known as a "Victoria Cross race"—that is, the competitors have to ride some distance, taking two or three hurdles on their way, to a point where there are arranged a number of figures in stuffed cases, shaped like human bodies; they then dismount, fire a round of blank cartridge, pick up a dummy each, and race back.

In this case, after the sports were over, the dummies were left on the ground, and about half an hour after the ground was deserted a vulture settled on the ground close to the dummies; while in about another five minutes more than thirty of the big birds had collected.

The birds seemed much puzzled as they carefully inspected each lay figure, walking from one to the next along the line, and eventually, after sitting in a circle for a short time, flew away.

They must have discovered the dummies by sight, though it is commonly believed that vultures rely on their sense of smell as well.

### Understood Exactly.

Customer: "I want some kind of a door spring, one that won't get out of order."

Shopman: "A door spring?"

Customer: "Yes, and one that won't require the strength of an elephant to open."

Shopman: "Hem!"

Customer: "And yet it must be strong enough to close the door, and not leave it swinging open a couple of inches."

Shopman: "I see."

Customer: "And when the door closes I don't want it to slam to like a catapult, with a jar that shakes the whole house from the roof to its foundations."

Shopman: "Yes; you want one that will close the door, and yet do it gently."

Customer: "Exactly. But I don't want any complicated arrangement that requires a skilled mechanic to attend to it."

Shopman: "No, of course not; you want something simple, yet strong and effective."

Customer: "Yes, something that can be put on or taken off easily; something that will do its work quietly yet thoroughly, and won't be eternally getting out of order."

Shopman: "I see. I know exactly what you want, sir, just exactly."

Customer: "Well, show me one."

Shopman: "We don't keep door springs."

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Mr. Skidmore (severely): "John, Mr. Jones tells me you knocked his son about shamefully to-day. Is that true?"

John: "No, father."

Mr. Skidmore: "Then what did Mr. Jones mean by telling me that?"

"He just made a mistake, that's all. I didn't knock Jim Jones about shamefully; I just thrashed him beautifully."

### Then What did He Say?

I.

II.

III.

IV.

### Rebuked.

A famous singer relates that whilst on tour in America he once travelled in a canal-boat. There sat opposite to him at dinner one day a Yankee with a large appetite, who seized hold of a large dish of peas, which he ate with his knife.

The knife was sharp, and as the man bolted the peas as rapidly as he could, he cut his mouth.

Upon this the negro waiter rebuked him, saying: "Look heah, mister, I don't want to hurt yer feelings, but if ye cut dat hole much larger, dere'll be nuffin' left on de table for me or de oder people."

### Well Meant, But——

A certain landlord is a very effusive sort of a man, much given to speaking before he thinks. He recently met one of his new tenants.

"Good morning, sir; good morning. Glad to see you looking so well. How do you like the house?"

"Very much, indeed.'

"Glad to hear it; very glad to hear it."

"Yes, sir, I like it. I hope I may die in the house."

"I hope so, too. Glad to hear you talk that way."

### While Awaiting the Signal.

Dom Pedro, who was for so many years Emperor of Brazil, once gave an audience to a young engineer who came to show him a new appliance for stopping railway-engines.

The emperor was pleased with the idea.

"The day after to-morrow," said he, "have your engine ready. We will have it coupled to my saloon-carriage and start. When going at full speed, I will give the signal to stop, and then we shall see how your invention works."

At the appointed time Dom Pedro entered his carriage, the young inventor mounted his engine, and on they sped for several miles. There came no signal, and the engineer began to fear that the emperor had fallen asleep.

Suddenly the engine came to a sharp curve round the edge of a cliff, when, to his horror, on the track directly ahead of them, the engineer saw a huge boulder.

He had just sufficient presence of mind to turn the crank of his brake and pull the engine up within a couple of yards of the fatal block.

Here Dom Pedro put his head out of the carriage window and asked to know the cause of this sudden stoppage. The engineer pointed at the rock, and Dom Pedro began to laugh.

"Push it to one side and go on!" he said calmly.

The engineer obeyed, and, kicking the stone, was further astonished to see it crumble into dust before him.

It was a block of starch, which the emperor had had made and placed on the rails the night before.

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When is butter like small Irish boys?—When it is made into little pats.

V.

# JERRY DODDS: MILLIONAIRE.

## A School Yarn of Mirth and Roguery.

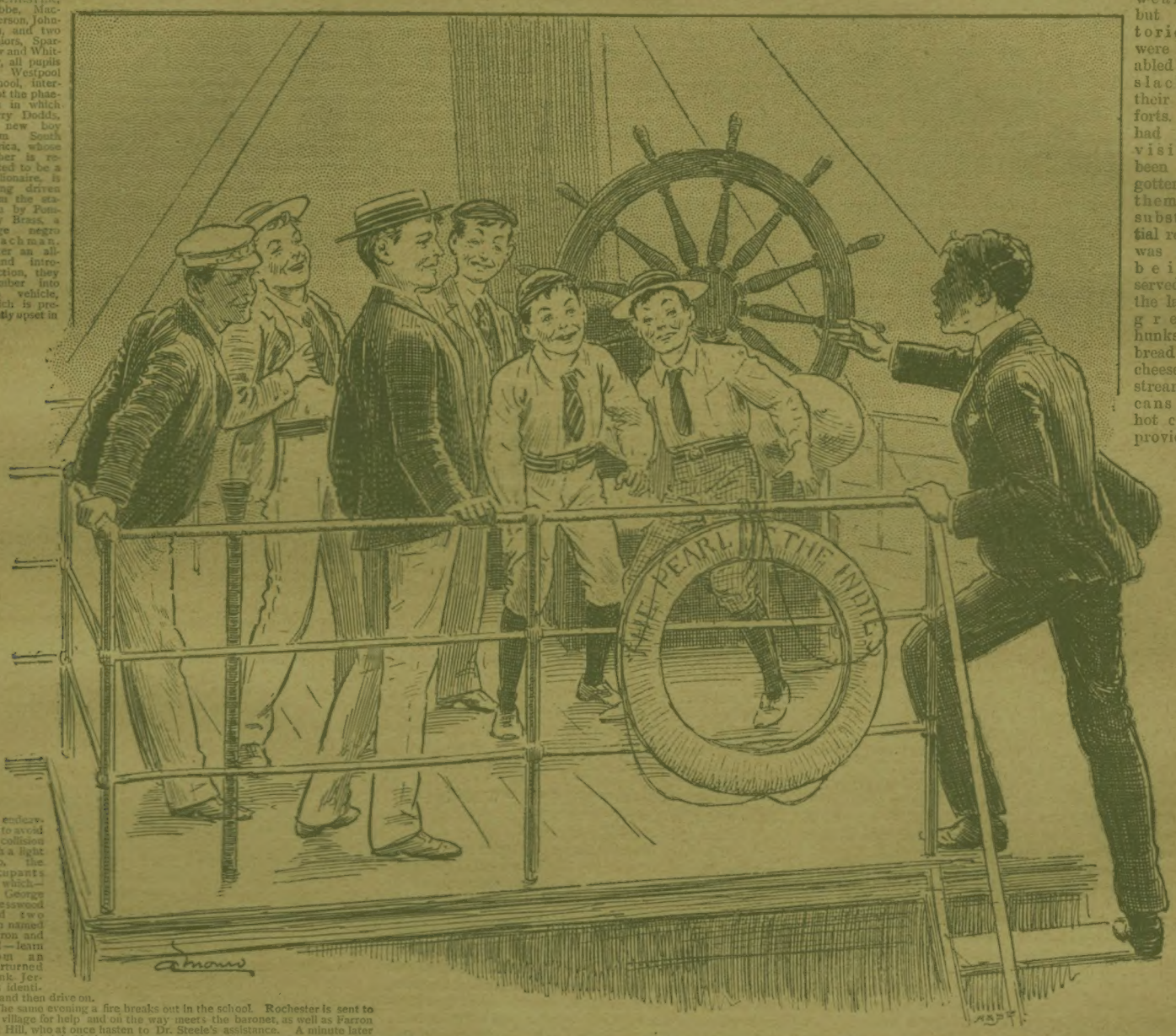
By H. BARROW-NORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOYS OF DORMITORY THREE," "GOMBURG'S REVENGE," ETC.

SYNOPSIS—CHAPTERS I.—IV.

ROCHESTER, Cobbe, Macpherson, Johnson, and two juniors, Sparrow and Whiting, all pupils at Westpool School, intercept the phaeton in which Jerry Dodds, a new boy from South Africa, whose father is reputed to be a millionaire, is being driven from the station by Pompey Brass, a huge negro coachman. After an all-round introduction, they clamber into the vehicle, which is presently upset in an endeavour to avoid a collision with a light trap, the occupants of which—Sir George Chesswood and two men named Farron and Hill—learn from an overturned trunk Jerry's identity, and then drive on.

The same evening a fire breaks out in the school. Rochester is sent to the village for help and on the way meets the baronet, as well as Farron and Hill, who at once hasten to Dr. Steele's assistance. A minute later Rochester is blindfolded and dragged from the path, but after a whispered, "We've got the wrong boy!" he is released, the assailants mysteriously disappearing. When he arrives back at the school with the fire brigade, headed by Simes, the blacksmith, all the occupants are safe, except Sparrow, Whiting, and Dodds. The first-named leaps from a window into a blanket, and, as the smoke clears for a moment, Dodds is seen supporting Whiting in his arms.




"TOPLADY DASHED UP, HIS FACE BLACKENED LIKE A CHIMNEY SWEEP'S" (p. 587).

### CHAPTER V.

#### A MYSTERIOUS ENTERPRISE.

IT was lucky for Whiting that when he sank unconscious under the stupefying fumes of the burning wing, he should have such a sturdy hero for a companion as Jerry Dodds proved to be.

Disdaining all thoughts of self in this moment of supreme peril, he appeared only to betray anxiety for his helpless comrade. Though he himself, with parched throat and oppressed and panting lungs, felt his senses ready to leave him, there was no thought for an instant of leaving Whiting to his fate.

For a moment, as a sudden change of draught swept back the encircling smoke through the blazing panels of the door behind him, he drank in with greedy gulps the refreshing air that came so deliciously to his nostrils. Then as a fresh shower of sparks, borne on a gust of smoke, warned him that at any moment the fickle current might return with quick unconsciousness in its breath, he raised Whiting in his arms and, thrusting his legs across the window ledge, looked forth. A hundred voices greeted him enthusiastically.

Placing one foot on the ledge and clutching the woodwork of the window-frame with his disengaged hand, with the other he gripped the limp and helpless figure of Whiting by the collar. For a moment he paused, arresting every eye below magnetically; then swinging the light figure of Whiting well out from the window, he poised it a second in mid-air and dropped it neat as a plummet into the blanket beneath. A pent-up shout of rejoicing greeted the feat; but in another moment it had changed to a cry of dismay as once more a dense volume of smoke laden with a thousand burning particles swept afresh from the window, hiding the rescuer in its breathless and suffocating interior.

"Jump, jump!" roared a host of voices as Pompey Brass, snatching Whiting from the blanket below, passed him on in safety.

An inarticulate cry of pain and despair came from above, then, through the belching veil of smoke, a compact little figure shot like a meteor into view, and, barely striking the blanket, rolled into Pompey Brass's safe grasp.

In another moment cheer on cheer broke from the frantic school and other onlookers as, borne high on Pompey's brawny shoulder, Jerry was carried in safety. The clank only of the engines put an end to the noisy vociferations as a steady stream of water was now poured into the burning wing. Of active helpers there was no lack, or clumsy obstructers either, but aided by the one and impeded by the other, Simes and his men, after strenuous labours, succeeded in cutting off the fire from the main portion of the building.

Long before this was achieved, however, the rooms so recently occupied by Jerry and his friends, and now abandoned to their fate, were a mass of destroying flame, prompting a shudder at the thought of the fate which might have befallen the unfortunate trio

The morning had already broken as the workers, wearied but victorious, were enabled to slacken their efforts. Nor had provisions been forgotten for them; a substantial repast was soon being served on the lawn; great hunks of bread and cheese and streaming cans of hot coffee providing a welcome reward to the army of tired workers. In this feast Sparrow, Whiting and Jerry Dodds, all now happily recovered from their momentary indisposition, joined with a healthy zest that left little doubt of their permanent recovery. Neither of the two former was apparently much troubled with his recent narrow escape; and as Sparrow, with his mouth full of food, remarked to Jerry Dodds, "there were worse things than fires for fun, and probably it would mean a day's holiday in the bargain."

His prognostication was speedily verified. The assembled school was almost immediately informed that a full day's unrestricted holiday would be granted in view of the unfortunate disorganisation of affairs which had taken place.

It was from the incidents, indeed, connected with this first day of Jerry Dodds' residence in Westpool School, that certain amusing and curious events sprang, to which we must now turn.

Standing unnoticed and alone amid the noisy discussion and preparation for various excursions which followed Dr. Steele's announcement, Jerry Dodds listened eagerly. The medley was interesting. Here, a party of elder boys, led by Smuke, Jarndyce and Willoughby, discussed a long tramp through

Nipperdale and Scoutridge; there a second party voted for Scallop Point and Fishwick; here a third group were for Sandy Cove and Chesterton; while yet a numerous and turbulent remainder noisily discussed the respective merits of "Spookers" and "Duffys" on the river at Siddington.

In the midst of it all, and while the discussion was at its noisiest, Jerry suddenly felt himself seized from behind, and looking round perceived Cobbe and Johnson. As he did so they signed to him mysteriously.

"Come on, Dodds!" whispered Cobbe hurriedly. "We'd nearly forgotten you in the hurry. Look as careless as you can and follow Johnson and me. Rochester and Macpherson are waiting in the shrubbery, and Sparrow and Whiting have gone with Pridgitt and Toplady for the grub. You haven't seen Firkin, have you, the fat chap we introduced you to last night?"

Receiving a reply in the negative, the two, without any further explanation, turned away and walked carelessly towards the door, with Jerry following. Reaching it, they suddenly encountered an enormously stout boy just entering, who looked around with a searching air of deliberation as though seeking someone. As he saw Cobbe and Johnson his fat, good-humoured face took on a sleepy smile of satisfaction, and leaning lazily against the doorway he awaited their approach.

"Hullo, Firkin, there you are!" said Cobbe gleefully. "Where *have* you been putting yourself? We've been all over the place."

"I heard Sparrow and Whiting had been asking for me," remarked Firkin. "Is there anything up?"

"Well, rather!" said Cobbe, looking round guardedly as he sank his voice. "We are going to run *her* to day."

"Never!" smiled Firkin with a total lack of the excitement which his retort seemed to indicate. "How about the coal?"

"Macpherson says we've enough in the bunkers for a trip," replied Cobbe, "and we each take a cob along as usual. Then there's the wood to eke out with. Besides we don't want too high a pressure; jolly nice we should look, shouldn't we, if we burst her boiler and scattered ourselves over the bay."

Firkin smiled with languid enjoyment of the picture conceived.

"But why to-day?" he asked. "I understood Macpherson to say he'd want a week to oil her well throughout."

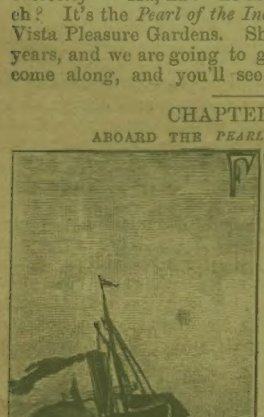
"Oh, she'll squeak no doubt till she's worn the rust off her piston rods," admitted Cobbe. "But look at the glorious chance! It's not every week we get a full day and dinner away."

"In fact," broke in Johnson, "we've given up the old notion of an hour's trip. Rochester's idea is to take her right out as far as Gull Rocks, swing round northward by Skiffington Bank and Rabbit Island and drop her home down the coast."

"She'll take her time, of course," resumed Cobbe. "Rochester says she's got barnacles on her as thick as a mussel bed, but Macpherson vouches for the engines, and that's all that we want. However, come along; they'll be waiting."—He turned to Jerry Dodds who had been listening with eager curiosity—"Ha, ha!" he laughed, "you're puzzled, eh? It's the *Pearl of the Indies* out by the old Bella Vista Pleasure Gardens. She's been lying there for years, and we are going to give her a cruise. But come along, and you'll see!"

## CHAPTER VI.

### ABOARD THE *PEARL OF THE INDIES*.



FOLLOWING Cobbe, as the latter, hastily concluding his remarks, led the way out in the direction of the shrubbery, Jerry Dodds accompanied him with a look of expectant curiosity on his face.

"But I say," he ventured to ask. "Does no one own this steamer?"

"Well," rejoined Cobbe, "theoretically speaking, I suppose someone owns her. There are the two thousand odd shareholders of the bankrupt pleasure grounds company, of course. But I should say if anyone had a claim to her it would be Toplady's father, who is solicitor to the company. At any rate Toplady says his pater hopes to get his bill of costs paid when the steamer, which is the only asset they have got, is sold. He is so jolly doubtful about it, however, that he has promised Toplady a bicycle out of it if it ever comes to pass; and that is how we come to have the keys. Toplady brought them down with him last half, when he knew he had an interest in the boat, in order to have a look at her, and we've kept them ever since—so, practically speaking, you may say the boat is Toplady's for the time being."

"We've made him first mate on that account," remarked Johnson with a dry grin; "though he can't tell her stem from her stern, and calls her a 'he.' Rochester is the skipper, and Macpherson chief engineer, and *they* both know something about it; but as for Pridgitt, Toplady's chum, whom we've appointed second engineer to please the latter, he couldn't tell a steam gauge from a monkey wrench. Cobbe and I, being modest, are the crew; while Sparrow and Whiting, who like dirty jobs, have been made stokers. You, by-the-bye," he added glancing at Jerry, "have been appointed purser, and Firkin here is head steward, though luckily for us there is no grub for him to look after."

Firkin smiled with a lazy amiability at Johnson's satire as he lounged alongside, but evidently did not think it worth the trouble to reply.

At this moment, too, turning into a little open space, they came across Rochester and Macpherson; while down another pathway which came from the direction of the kitchen, Sparrow and Whiting appeared, accompanied by two other boys considerably older than themselves. The latter were Toplady and Pridgitt, two inordinately tall and lanky boys, whose principal characteristic seemed to be a marked jealousy of any infringement of Toplady's authority in connection with the boat, and a tendency to think themselves constantly overlooked, which had some foundation in fact.

"I say you know, you fellows," said Toplady with a frown, as he saw Jerry Dodds and Firkin, "I didn't say they could come. Firkin is all right, of course, and I'm glad to see Dodds after the jolly plucky way he behaved at the fire last night, but I think you ought to have consulted me first."

"It's all right, Toplady," said Rochester. "We knew, as you say, that you'd be glad to see Dodds, and therefore we asked him."

"And we brought Firkin for the ballast," remarked Cobbe with a wink. "Macpherson said we were rather light in the water and wanted a deeper draught."

"That's all right, then," grinned Toplady, who could appreciate a joke if it was broad enough. "What are they to be, Rochester? Have you appointed them?"

"Firkin is head steward," said Rochester, "and Dodds is the ship's purser."

"Purser?" repeated Pridgitt. "What is that? Is he under Toplady and me?"

"Certainly!" said Rochester.

"We ought to have been Skipper and First Engineer, you know, ought Toplady and I," pursued Pridgitt looking around. "But we only agreed to Rochester and Macpherson taking the first places out of consideration of—er—"

"Your own incompetence," suggested Johnson. "Well, I for one am glad you had the sense to do it. I shouldn't care to trust myself far with Toplady at the wheel, and you in the engine-room. Anyhow, it's arranged. If Rochester, weaned, so to speak, on salt water, and a captain's son in the bargain, can't run us what little we want I shall be surprised; and as for engines, what the Macpherson family don't know of them isn't of much account."

"'Deed they're simple things, yon," said Macpherson with easy confidence; "and if I couldn't drive a wee bit ferry boat like the *Pearl* I'd be ashamed."

"That's right, then," said Rochester cheerfully; "and now we'd better be moving. I presume you got our allowance of tuck, Sparrow?"

"Two loaves and the etceteras," said Sparrow. "I told Mrs. Pinfold it was a picnic for ten, and that we'd prefer things in the bulk for convenience. Of course I'd to give our names before she shelled out, and she suggested sardine sandwiches; but I said if she'd give us the loaves whole and two tins of sardines we'd hunk off for ourselves with our penknives when the time came."

"Good!" remarked Rochester. "How about the butter, though? We lose there!"

"That's all right," remarked Whiting, tapping his breast pocket.

"Um," said Rochester, as he glanced at him. "It may be right now, but how will it be in half an hour? Better take it out, Whiting, and put it in a rhubarb leaf as we pass the garden. Come along, boys."

Proceeding down through the shrubbery and reaching the highway by a side road, they turned off to the right in the opposite direction to that taken by Rochester when he had gone to Westpool the previous night. Bella Vista Bay lay only two miles away, but as it was approached for some distance by the same road leading to Siddington and Scallop Point it became necessary to lose no time in order to elude the observation of the other contingents.

Such, however, had been the prompt decision of the little party in arranging matters, as well as the celerity of Sparrow and Whiting in securing the necessary supplies, that they were already well on their way ere the first member of any of the other groups had left the gateway of the school. Stopping only for a minute or two at Cobbe's suggestion, to buy a dozen red herrings and some potatoes from the cart of an itinerant greengrocer proceeding to Westpool, they proceeded expeditiously for Bella Vista Bay.

"It will be something for the steward to do, at any rate," observed Cobbe, as he glanced at Firkin; "and there's nothing simpler to cook."

Reaching a road at length which, turning off from the highway, ran seaward through the narrow neck of two jutting spurs of rocky hill, they proceeded now more leisurely along it, till presently a sudden turn brought them in full view of the sea.

To the left lay Bella Vista Bay, forming in truth a delightful picture with its broad sweep of rocky shore stretching to Scallop Point, a bold promontory two miles away. Immediately below was the site of the old pleasure grounds, picturesquely situated on the sandy shore of a little cove, but long since deserted. Hastening downhill, a short walk brought them to the grass-grown and dismantled portals, through which they speedily entered without let or hindrance. Within, here and there a ruined pavilion or band-stand, rotten with disuse, though with their gaudy paint and gilding still showing in parts, stood tumbling to decay.

Passing them, however, with hardly a glance, the party hastened to the natural little harbour below, where, moored to the side of the pile-driven wharf, the *Pearl of the Indies*—a pearl indeed!—an ancient and ramshackle old paddle steamer, lay forlorn and weather-beaten. With her dirty yellow funnel pointing coldly to the sky, her decks bleached with rain and sun, her empty binnacle, and wheel swathed with rotting tarpaulins, she seemed about the last object in the world to arouse the enthusiasm of an onlooker; but as the noisy party tumbled aboard she might well have been the finest steam yacht afloat.

Producing his keys and unlocking the various doors and scuttles, Toplady threw them open with all the dignity of ownership; then he turned to Rochester.

"Captain," he declared grandiloquently, "I place 'him' in your hands with every confidence."

"Thanks," said Rochester with a smile. "Now my lads, to work! You each know what you've got to do."

"Ay, ay, sir," came the response; and soon the whole vessel gave forth the unwonted hum of busy life. Below, in the grimy regions of the stokehold, Sparrow and Whiting, with their coats off, and assisted for the time being by Cobbe and Johnson, laid fires beneath the boilers, a thin film of smoke from the funnel presently indicating the success of their efforts. Meantime, Macpherson busied himself about the engines in a way which showed he knew what he was about, though he was sadly hampered by Pridgitt, the second engineer, with requests as to what he had to do.

"Ye'd best oil everything ye can think of now," said Macpherson. "But once we get steam up, if ye take my tip ye'll clear out; for it's clear to me ye're not safe where there's machinery. Maybe Firkin will find ye a plain job, peeling potatoes."

Meantime indeed Firkin had lighted a roaring fire in the galley, on which he soon had a huge iron pot boiling merrily. Seated in front of this, he peeled the potatoes deliberately and methodically, dropping each one into the boiling water as he finished them, though it was still only ten o'clock in the morning. Firkin's ideas of cooking, indeed, appeared to be primitive in the extreme; and as Cobbe and Johnson, resting momentarily from their labours, paid him a visit, they surveyed him in wonderment.

"Hullo," said Cobbe, looking at the pot where the potatoes bobbed about with the fury of their boiling, "what time are you thinking of having dinner, Firkin? I understood one o'clock was the time."

"So it is," replied the latter.

Cobbe pointed to the pan.

"How about the potatoes?" he asked sarcastically. "Do you think they'll be done enough at the rate they're going?"

"I should think three hours ought to do," said

Firkin calmly. "They take time, I know; but the fire is a good one. The red herrings I shan't put in till about twelve o'clock, of course; being cured they won't need as much boiling."

"Boilin'!" gasped Johnson. "You are never thinking o' boiling them, Firkin?"

"What else am I to do?" asked Firkin. "I can't fry them without a pan."

"Why, you crazy ostrich!" said Cobbe, "you don't boil red herrings, nor fry them either. And those potatoes! Ha, ha! Three hours? Twenty minutes is ample time at the rate you are going, unless you want to boil them to paste. 'Pon my word, it is fortunate we came up to see you. Take them out at once and then come along with Johnson and myself."

Turning away, while Firkin performed this operation with a long spoon, they proceeded to the bridge, where Rochester, having unpacked the wheel, was testing the efficacy of the speaking tube with Toplady, who had just gone below for the purpose. As they approached he tapped the tube impatiently, and putting his mouth to it, blew vigorously. There came a sudden cry from below as he did so, followed by Macpherson's harsh laugh. Then, while they stared dismayed, there came a clatter on the hatchway and Toplady dashed up, his face blackened like a chimney-sweep's.

"Hullo, Toplady, what's to do?" asked Rochester with an involuntary grin. "Did you get my order?"

"Get your order?" vociferated Toplady with a glaring look of anger. "Ho yes! Is it a lark or what? I got a pound of dust in my right ear, that's what I got. I see what it is. Cobbe and Johnson have arranged this. But I've had enough of it. You can all clear out; I am going to lock up."

What answer might have been given to this alarming threat it is hard to tell; for at this instant there came a second cry, as though heralding some fresh catastrophe. The fierce hiss of steam and the noisy crash of falling utensils came from the galley, with a suddenness and an uproar almost impossible to describe; and at the same moment, through the open doorway a cloud of steam issued with a volume that threatened speedily to envelop the whole steamer.

"Boys!" gasped Cobbe, as the little party of onlookers gazed in wild consternation, "What in the name of madness has the lunatic been up to now? Are we to have the steamer burnt from under our feet? Hullo! Hullo! there, Firkin, where are you?"

A faint and muffled answer came back from the galley.

(*To be continued; commenced in No. 397.*)

# Another Offer for Postcards.

BESIDES a **"Chums" Bicycle, Five Powerful Telescopes,** and **Four "Chums" Cricket Bats** or **Gold-Mounted Fountain Pens,** which are announced on p. 591,

## *Six Handsome Silver Watches.*

all of which are excellent time-keepers, are to be awarded in the following Competition. Every Chum is asked to send to me, on a *postcard*,

***A Sentence Composed of Twelve Words.***

with initials forming the words, "Bravo Roberts." The order of these Twelve Initials must be adhered to; and any Sentence will do, but a sensible one will be chosen by me in preference to one without meaning. Only steards are to be forwarded, not more than one from each Competitor. 1 the Prizes, equally divided between the Three Classes—

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Class I. For those over 16 years of age;
" II. For those over 14 and under 16 years of age;
" III. For those under 14 years of age;

will be given to the senders of the Best and most interesting Sentences. Postcards must reach me on or before **Monday, May 21st, 1900.**

**IMPORTANT.**—Be sure to read the paragraph headed "P.S." printed on p. 591.

PRIZE EDITOR.

A MAN who considers himself a military authority, desirous of inspiring a bugler-boy with patriotic sentiments, asked him in the most impressive manner the following question:

"What would you think if you saw a banner waving over the field of battle?"

"I should think the wind was blowing," was the youngster's reply.

## WHEN THE "RANG-TANG CRITTUR" ESCAPED!

### Teddy Rues the Part which he Played.

"PHEW! Just listen to this!"

Matthews had accepted a handbill from a seedy-looking individual at the school gates, and, turning to his chum, proceeded to read the notice aloud:—

"PUBLIC WARNING!
"£50 REWARD.

"The Proprietor of Clinker's Celebrated Menagerie desires to warn the inhabitants of Glenbrook, that the most ferocious and dangerous of his world-famed collection of wild beasts is at large in the vicinity.

Owing to the inexcusable carelessness of his keeper, Pongo—the full-grown, vicious and untamable orang-utang—escaped from his cage during the night.

"As the brute is capable of doing a tremendous amount of damage to life and property, a reward of fifty pounds is offered for his capture—alive if possible.

"(Signed) THEOPHILUS CLINKER,
"June 1st, 18—. (Proprietor)."

"Only fancy," ejaculated Matthews as he folded

"THEY ACCORDINGLY ADJOURNED—WITH MUCH MORE HASTE THAN DIGNITY" (p. 588).

up the handbill, "what a lark we might have if the brute would pay a visit to the school!"

Short didn't see where the lark was to come in.

"If this description of the fugitive is to be relied upon," he said, "I've no particular desire to make Pongo's acquaintance."

"Pooh!" remarked Matthews contemptuously. "Did you ever hear of a showman whose word could be relied upon? They're professional prevaricators to a man, and as likely as not this 'full-grown, vicious, and untamable' Pongo is as meek and mild a specimen of the monkey tribe as ever perched on an organ!"

At this juncture Matthews became aware that he had another listener. Teddy Chalmers had strolled up, and was regarding him with an amused smile.

"Well?" demanded Matthews of the newcomer. "What are you grinning at?"

"Thoughts," laughed Teddy. "You don't know what you're talking about. At any rate, you don't know Pongo."

"I suppose you do," snapped Matthew.

"Rather!" responded Teddy. "Twelve months ago, before I came to Glenbrook, I knew Mr. Clinker well, and had the run of his menagerie. I got quite chummy with the animal alluded to in that notice, and I'm open to wager, Matthews, that if you met him in the open you'd run a mile and scream an hour!"

"How big is he?" asked Short.

"Oh, replied Teddy," he's nearly as tall as I am, but that isn't his strong point. His long hairy arms, which nearly touch the ground, his brawny chest, as broad as a barn-door, and——"

"That will do, thank you," interrupted Matthews, linking his arm in that of his chum. "Come along, Short, we've our fishing tackle to fix up yet."

"I say, Matthews," shouted Teddy, as the pair moved off, "if you're going fishing, I should advise you to steer clear of the path through the wood. Old Pongo was last seen in that direction."

"Thanks for the hint," retorted Matthews loftily, "which is harmless and useless. We shall go the nearest way; and if I meet your friend of the long arms and barn-door chest, I shall probably kick him into the nearest tree!"

Ten minutes later Billy Clinker, son and heir of the proprietor of Clinker's world-famed menagerie, received a surprise visit from an old friend.

"What," he yelled, seizing his visitor by the hand and dragging him into a side tent—"what, Teddy Chalmers?"

"Hush!" whispered Teddy. "I've a magnificent idea. It's far too good to share with a crowd. Come along out for a stroll!"

II.

"I WOULDN'T go through the wood, giants. Every farmer in the neighbourhood's out wi' his gun, an' one of yer moight be mistook for the 'rang-tang crittur an' filled full o' shot!"

The prospect was anything but pleasing, and Short was in favour of turning back. Matthews, however, had still a little of his courage left, and walked on without so much as thanking the farm-hand for his warning.

Matthews' stock of courage held out for another hundred yards or so. Then he acknowledged that, after all, there was "really no necessity to go right through the wood."

"Of course," he remarked, in a strangely subdued tone of voice, "we have come far enough to convince Chalmers that we are not afraid of his beastly monkey. However, if we went any further we might be potted by some ignorant farmer, and—— What's that?"

"It's—it's nothing," stammered Short, who had stepped on a dry twig, "but it's—it's not safe!"

At that moment, with a roar that shook the wood, a huge hairy figure dropped from the lower branches of a tree not twenty yards away.

"Pongo!" shrieked Short.

Alternately jibbering, chattering, and roaring, the repulsive-looking brute, savagely drumming his broad chest with his hairy paws, advanced with a series of ungainly hops.

Short stopped long enough to see all this, and Matthews thus obtained a fifteen yards' lead in the race for the stile and safety.

Short was a slow mover at times, but this wasn't one of them. He flashed over the stile a yard in front of Matthews, and dashed along the road with out pausing to see whether he was pursued or not.

Suddenly shouts were heard from the wood, followed by the sound of two shots as Farmer Barker tried to bring down Pongo with bird-shot, at a range of over a hundred yards.

The yell with which Pongo greeted this attempt on his life was almost human, and Short, glancing fearfully back over his shoulder, saw that the brute had dropped his clumsy, hopping gait, and was swinging along in his wake with the speed and grace of a born sprinter.

At the sound of the firing, Mr. Tobias Tottle, in dressing-gown and slippers, threw open the front door of his residence.

There was little love lost at any time between the boys of Glenbrook School and "Old Toby Tottles."

The old gentleman's feelings, then, may be imagined when he saw his garden gate smashed to splinters by the mad charge of a couple of those horrible boys.

Mr. Tottle was even more surprised when, instead of running away, the boys dashed up the garden path straight for the house.

"Save us, Mr. Tottle," shrieked the terrified Short. "Save us!"

At that moment Mr. Tottle caught a glimpse of a third figure tearing up the path, and, with a howl of terror, he bolted into the house and sought refuge in the library, the door of which he locked on the inside.

While Short and Matthews, hotly pursued by Pongo, dashed into the house and took the stairs three steps at a time, Mr. Tobias Tottle threw up the library window, put a police-whistle to his lips, and blew a blast almost calculated to reach the ears of every constable in the county.

III.

"WHAT is it, Mr. Tottle?"

Constables Bolt and Busby had responded to Mr.

Tottle's summons, and were standing on the lawn outside the library window.

"I've a ferocious wild beast and two boys in the house," began Tobias.

"It's agin the law," pronounced Bolt; "the law don't allow nobody to keep wild beasts to the common danger, and——"

"Who wants to keep 'em, you idiot?" roared Tobias. "I want you to come in and clear 'em out."

At that moment a yell of such a blood-curdling nature rang through the house that Mr. Tottle, forgetting his age and infirmities, placed his hands on the window-sill, vaulted out on to the lawn, and made for the gate, stopping his ears with his fingers.

Bolt and Busby were apparently of opinion that the matter could be discussed just as well in the road, and they accordingly adjourned—with much more haste than dignity.

Meanwhile the position of Short and Matthews had become desperate. At the top of the first flight of steps was a corridor, down which the fugitives fled, with the pursuer close to their heels.

The door of an empty room at the back of the house stood invitingly open, and the boys reached it almost together. Before they could close the door behind them, however, the enemy had made a rush and gained admittance.

Stretching out a hairy paw, it clutched Matthews by the shoulder, shook him till his teeth rattled, and whispered fiercely:

"Drop that row, you idiot! Slip out of the window and fetch my clothes!"

Matthews' fear changed to surprise, and his surprise into indignation as he recognised that voice.

"Chalmers!" he gasped—"Teddy Chalmers!"

"Of course it's me," growled Teddy, removing his hideous mask. "There's no time to explain now. Slip away and fetch my clothes, there's a good fellow! They're in a parcel under the tree where I first saw you. Go, quick, there's a——"

"Fetch 'em yourself," wrathfully ejaculated Matthews. "I'll——"

"Haven't I collected enough sparrow-shot for one day?" groaned Teddy, painfully shrugging his shoulders.

Eventually Matthews was persuaded to fetch the clothes of the unfortunate practical joker. He threw the parcel up to the window, and received in exchange the rig-out Teddy Chalmers had borrowed from his friend, Billy Clinker.

Teddy and Short left the house by the front way, almost as hastily as they had entered it.

They didn't wait to join Farmer Barker, who, with constables Bolt and Busby, had just announced his intention of entering the house and settling accounts with the "rang-tang!"

An hour or two later a second handbill was issued by the proprietor of Clinker's menagerie, announcing that "The intelligent orang-utang, Pongo, has succeeded, to the great delight of his owner, in finding his way back to the menagerie and is Now On View."

"That's always the way with Pongo," Teddy explained to his friends. "His interest in the show invariably brings him back in time for the first performance. I'll introduce you to him to-night."

Teddy fulfilled his promise, remarking as he introduced Billy Clinker, professionally known as Pongo:

"You see, it's a case of supply and demand. The original Pongo died some time ago, and Mr. Clinker vainly endeavoured to rub along without him. An unreasoning public demanded its Pongo, and, as the genuine article was not available, in order to avert bankruptcy Billy donned the mantle—or rather the skin—of the dead hero, and has played the part with conspicuous success ever since."

Clinker's menagerie was crowded that evening, three of the most interested spectators being Teddy Chalmers, Matthews, and Short.

"I say, Teddy," chuckled Matthews as they left the show, "though you made a pretty fair monkey this afternoon, you've a lot to learn. Your friend Billy Clinker knocks your performance into a cocked hat."

"I know it," admitted Teddy, who appeared to be stiff and sore, "but even Billy wouldn't do the part so naturally if he had half a dozen guns to contend with! Sparrow-shot upsets one's nerves."

TOM H. FOWLER.

I WAS reading in a French paper the other day an amusing account of a cricket match, written by a French Baron, a very good sportsman and one greatly desirous to understand all games. Unfortunately for the instruction of the French people, this excellent man appears to have got the oddest notions of our game of cricket into his head. Some of his observations are altogether remarkable. The wicket, he says, is of three bars, but there is another wicket of one bar put upon the top of it. When the little bar tumbles, not being well defended, the batsman has made a bad stroke and the *bouler* scores one. As for the implement which contributes to the safety of the bars (the defence of *le wicket*, that is), we find it to be a kind of board so held that the ball is turned thereby and chased by the fielders, who, marvellous to tell, score one when they catch it.

—*—

At intervals, says this worthy Baron, all the players must throw themselves flat upon the ground and lie there until Monsieur the Batsman has run to a white house at the edge of the arena and run back again. And, he adds, there are two policemen in long white overcoats, who at once interfere and separate the *bouler* and the batsman when these two engage in a personal attack. Bravo, the Baron. It is evident that he knows all about *le cricket*.

—*—

I mention this extraordinary article because I have this week received a letter from a correspondent signing himself "La France," in which I am asked if there is any probability that cricket matches will ever be played between the French and the English. To which I would answer, No, I fear there is not. The thing is just as probable as the appearance of Mr. Kruger in a bath-chair by Trafalgar Square, or the conversion of our Waggles to the right understanding of the Queen's English. *Le cricket* is not a game which the Frenchman loves. He cannot understand why one man should stand up to let another man throw a ball at him. He does not love to be called "ze butaire finger." All the English are mad, he says. He will go out to shoot rabbits—if he can catch them sitting; he is a very good horseman and a fine fencer, but otherwise his sporting abilities are, in the words of Waggles' own French master, "ver little nozings." So I don't think he will come over to play cricket with us this year.

—*—

Personally, I wish the Frenchman would. International rivalries are the soul of sport. We play the French at football, and we are teaching them the game, so that by-and-by they will be creditable performers. People in Paris are beginning to understand football terms—"off ze zide," "un try," "ze golly posts," "collare eem." By encouraging them to play we enlarge the field of our opponents and do good to the game. Ask yourselves how much cricket owes to the Australians—whom, alas! we are not to have with us this year. And do you remember the excitement when Cornell and Yale came to Henley? Rowing was more keen after that visit, I can assure. And if we could make fine cricketers of the French and Germans, imagine the enthusiasm there would be at Lord's!

—*—

Waggles says, *apropos* this, that half the fun of life lies in a good old shout. At cricket, at football, on the banks of a river, at a cycle race, the man who opens his lungs and yells has the best of the day. I don't know whether this be a sound argument, but Waggles, certainly, carries it to excess. He declares that a kindly young man carried him the other night to an improving lecture upon the history and literature of Etruria. Now, Waggles is a good boy, but he does not care much for the history and literature of Etruria. He prefers a bicycle race or a cricket match. To do him justice, he appears to have listened to the lecturer quietly for about half an hour, and then his patience failed him.

—*—

"I was 'arf asleep, being bored horrid, guv'ner," he says, "when an idea kum inter me head. 'Three groans fer Kruger,' says I, a-thinking as histery and litershure wouldn't be no worse thereby; and three groans we give, good loud rollin' uns as fetched the roof. Then the lecturer got wrathy, and said, 'Gents, I beg of you remember where you hare,' and he went on a-telling us as how a certain warse wasn't like another warse, 'cause the two of 'em was different. So I says, 'Three cheers fer Bawbs, God bless him!' and we fetched the roof agen. Arter that we had some musick, 'Rule Brittanyere' and 'God save the Queen,' and the professor he sat down. 'This yere lecture carn't go hon,' says he. 'Then leave it hoff,' says I, and the people laughed. 'Let's have "Soldiers of the Queen," and leave the warses till next time,' says I. 'The 'Trurians won't mind,' says I; 'they've bin a long time dead. Don't suppose they care anyway. If your housemaid drops one of them warses, Professer, them 'Trurians won't give her notice, betcherlife.' But he didn't see the argyment, guv'ner, not a little bit. He says, 'Remove that youth from the 'awl,' and I made me bow ter 'em. But I'd opened my lungs, and my appetite wus good next mornin'—fust class, in fact."

—*—

It is certainly impossible to teach this boy anything, least of all the impropriety of interrupting a lecture upon the Etrurians with a stave of "Rule Britannia." South Africa, indeed, is as much in his thoughts as it is in the thoughts of our contributors, who continue to bombard me with their questions, and are as keen Britishers as ever. Many of these letters raise old points, but there is one this week which strikes a new note—a letter from "C. R. T.," of Hull, who asks me if it is wise to think of going out to South Africa in search of employment when the war is over. This question is of great interest at the present time.

—*—

"C. R. T.," you must know, is a clerk; and I am inclined to be of the opinion that the demand for clerks will not be great in South Africa when our trouble at last is settled. After all, there are thousands of clerks the world over, and a man who has a good berth here would be foolish to throw it up on the off chance of a better one out yonder. On the other hand, an adventurous fellow might well make a fortune at the Cape if he strikes in at the right time. Lads able to rough it, lads who can turn their hands to many employments, good riders, lads with some knowledge of engineering, of farming, of railroads, of mining, will all stand to make a big thing. The merely useful person, who can read and write and sum figures, will not, I am afraid, be in the running even after the war. But all Chums about to begin life, fellows seeking an adventurous and open-air vocation, who are not given to kid gloves and feather beds, would do well to turn their thoughts to the South, and to ask themselves if they are not willing to risk something on the

## It Didn't Matter.

*Keeper (out shooting birds with young Cockney):* "STOP, SIR, YOU'VE NO CARTRIDGE."
*Sportsman:* "HOLD YOUR NOISE, STUPID, THE BIRDS DON'T KNOW."

off chance of making much. But they must remember that the men who win will not be those who delay. If it were done, lads, then, when 'tis done, 'twere well it were done quickly. Keep your eyes and ears open and mind you start out with the first of them.

—*—

Here's a long letter to-day from Mr. Roberts, of Liverpool, who thinks, and very sensibly too, that all boys should be taught to act as firemen, so that in case of emergency they would be able to do something as amateurs should fire break out in their schools. It's a capital notion, I say, and one to be encouraged. Many schools, especially private schools, are dangerous buildings from a fire point of view, and heaven knows what would happen if a blaze came.

—*—

The oddest part of the business is that so few schoolmasters take fire into their calculations. They would not know what to do if the alarm were raised, and the panic would be awful. Just imagine the ringing cry of "fire" in some of the dormitories you know. What would happen there? you may ask yourselves. Who would point out the right windows to the panic-stricken lads? It's all very well to make light of these things, but I have seen people burnt to death, and I shall never forget the sight as long as I live.

—*—

The first fatal fire I ever witnessed was in Aldersgate Street, at a chemical factory not far from the station there. I was one of the first to be up to the place, from which, at the moment, only thick sulphurous smoke was pouring. Anon sheets of blue flame shot out of the lower windows, and presently loud cries above told us that people were in the blazing building. For a few awful seconds we saw the faces of five poor girls at one of the upper storeys. We were impotent to save them—there was, apparently no fire-escape in the building—and their doom was assured. They disappeared altogether at last without a word or act to save themselves, and it is to be supposed that the smoke had rendered them almost insensible before the burning floor sank with them to the fiery furnace below. But from that hour I knew what the meaning of fire was, and I have never forgotten the lesson.

—*—

No, sirs, every school should practise fire drill; every household might well practise it. If the dormitories be high, the boys should be instructed where to assemble in case of alarm—at a window facing the street if possible, and where the drop to the ground is most favourable. An escape should be provided, and should be used now and then, just to show how it's done. Let one of the under-masters be lowered down for the benefit of the others. He won't like it—he'll be in a blue funk; but the boys will rejoice, and it will show how the escape works. And beyond this, every big school should be provided with fire buckets and hand pumps. A blazing curtain high up in a room has set many a house on fire, when, had there been a pump handy, the thing would have been out in five minutes or thereabouts. Let us, in short, thank Master Roberts for the excellent suggestion which he has made, and pass it on to all concerned.

—*—

Heroism and Patriotism are two words that at the present moment are more to the fore than any others; and Chums will, I daresay, welcome the new issue in penny weekly numbers of Messrs. Cassell & Company's famous "Heroes of Britain in Peace and War," to which is to be added the well-known work entitled "Peril and Patriotism." In completed form the two books will consist of no fewer than 1,600 quarto pages, with hundreds of stirring illustrations as well as portraits of heroes, and Nos. 1 and 2 can now be obtained from any bookseller or newsagent.

**** *Letters from Chums to the Editor are invited, and if of general interest will be dealt with in these columns.*

## CRICKETERS AND SOLDIERS TOO.

### "Well Played, Sirs, for your Country."

THE British love of sports is inherent, and it was hardly surprising, therefore, to hear that at quite an early stage of the siege of Ladysmith the beleaguered "Tommies" found relaxation in cricket, despite the fact that balls which had nothing whatever to do with the game were flying and bursting overhead.

From Kimberley came a similar report; while Colonel Baden-Powell mentioned in one of his dispatches that Sunday was a day of rest in Mafeking, as far as Boer shells were concerned, until the besiegers heard that the plucky little garrison endeavoured to relieve its feelings during the lull by means of cricket and other sports. Such proceedings shocked the Boers, and they expressed their sentiments by bombarding the town for seven days in the week instead of six as before.

MR. F. S. JACKSON.
(*Photo: Hawkins & Co., Brighton.*)

But apart from the fondness for cricket displayed by British soldiers in circumstances which can only be described as most trying, the spirit of this country is reflected in the fact that there are now fighting at the front more than enough of first-class county cricketers to play a match with full teams of eleven each.

MAJOR R. M. POORE.
(*Photo: Hawkins & Co., Brighton.*)

When, after the outbreak of hostilities, the cry "Rally to the Flag!" spread through the Queen's dominions, athletes of every description eagerly responded to the call, and none more readily than county cricketers.

For instance, Mr. (now Captain) F. S. Jackson, who is, perhaps, the finest all-round English cricketer, is at the present time one of the most energetic officers in the 3rd Battalion Lancaster Regiment (Militia), at the Cape.

Less than three years ago, during a match against Surrey on the Headingley ground at Leeds, the Yorkshire team celebrated the Queen's Jubilee of 1897 by singing "God Save the Queen," while Tunnicliffe, the professional, waved a huge Union Jack. Little must Mr. Jackson have then thought that he would soon be playing for England on a field of warfare.

An old Harrovian, he excels in hunting and shooting as well as in cricket, and his experiences as occasional captain of the Yorkshire team in place of Lord Hawke, and also as captain of Cambridge University in his younger days, will doubtless help him in the leading of the men now in his charge.

MR. F. W. MILLIGAN.
(*Photo: Hawkins & Co., Brighton.*)

Another member of the Yorkshire team, Mr. F. W. Milligan, the son of a soldier, went out with Lord Hawke's team to South Africa about eighteen months ago, and, scenting trouble ahead, decided to stay at the Cape.

Just before the war commenced he obtained a commission as a lieutenant in the Bechuanaland Frontier Force; and was one of Colonel Plumer's gallant band who strove so hard to relieve Mafeking. In the desperate encounter with the Boers within sight of the besieged town on April 7th, he, while holding on with the utmost tenacity to the position assigned to him, paid the full penalty for his pluck. He was the first county cricketer to fall for his country in the present War. All honour to him.

MR. J. F. BYRNE.
(*Photo: Byrne & Co., Richmond.*)

The Hampshire cricketer and the sensational century maker of last year, Major R. M. Poore, was one of the first to be dispatched to the Cape. Curiously enough, it was while serving with his regiment (7th Hussars) in South Africa—he fought both in the Matabele and the Mashonaland campaigns—that he first came into prominence as a batsman by his splendid performances with the bat against Lord Hawke's team, which visited the Cape in 1896.

Previous to that time he had been in India on the staff of Lord Harris (then Governor of Bombay), to whom he owes much of his skill in the game. But it is not only as a cricketer that Major Poore shines. Besides being a brilliant exponent of polo, lawn tennis, and football, he gained in 1898 the highest honours at the Royal Military Tournament as a swordsman. Major Poore is an Irishman, stands 6 feet 4 inches in height, and is wonderfully popular. On the staff of Sir Redvers Buller, he is now commanding the Military Mounted Police in South Africa.

Hampshire, by the way, is well represented at the front. Mr. E. I. M. Barrett, who holds a commission in the Lancashire Fusiliers, will be recognised as an old Cheltonian. Although he has so far failed to maintain his school reputation as a cricketer, he is still expected to do great things with the bat. He was slightly wounded while endeavouring to cross the Tugela at Venter's Spruit, previous to the terrible battle of Spion Kop.

Captain Barton, an old Sherborne boy; Captain Bradford, "no-balled" last season for throwing; as well as Colonel Spens, who was educated at Haileybury College, are also members of the Hampshire team, which will sadly miss them this year.

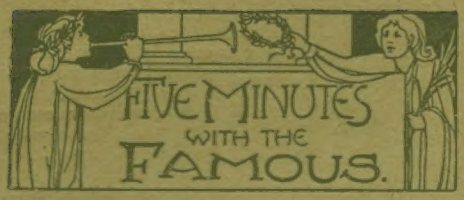
MR. A. J. TURNER.
(*Photo: Hawkins & Co., Brighton.*)

Mr. J. F. Byrne, whose fame as a Rugby footballer overshadows his career as a cricketer, is a member of the Warwickshire Club; and although his appearances have been few, yet his ability with the bat is undoubted. He served in Kimberley throughout the siege, and was married there while the Boers still surrounded the town.

Mr. A. J. Turner, of Essex, is in the Royal Artillery, and had the misfortune to be shut up in Ladysmith during its siege. He was one of the men who, before the relief, helped to train the gun that silenced the Boer "Long Tom."

The foregoing names by no means exhaust the list of first-class cricketers who have taken part in the war; and in next week's "Chums" a second Chat (with Portraits) dealing with the subject will be printed.

S.




KING GEORGE OF GREECE wears on his watch-chain, as a charm, a bullet which was aimed at him by a would-be assassin, and which embedded itself in his carriage. He considers it a safeguard against further attacks on his life.

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MR. JUSTICE BUCKLEY, appointed judge not long back, is the son of a clergyman, and years ago used to sing in the choir of his father's church. He is said to have always looked so austere and grave that he frightened the choir-boys, who used to declare that he never smiled.

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LORD ROSEBERY was a "singularly attractive boy," with a very handsome and thoughtful face. One of his masters said when he was at school that he was already a "budding bibliomaniac." He gave the impression at that period of being very ambitious, but at the same time anxious to attain his objects with as little trouble to himself as possible.

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THE Austrian Emperor succeeded to his throne quite unexpectedly. When he was a youth of eighteen, serving in a dragoon regiment, he was told that the next day he must exchange his helmet for a crown. At four o'clock on the following morning messengers were sent to ministers, diplomats, and troops, telling them to hasten in uniform to the Bishop's Palace; and, just after daybreak, the Emperor Ferdinand read to them his act of abdication. Then Francis Joseph knelt down before his uncle, to rise again Emperor of Austria.

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WHEN Sir Arthur Sullivan was about thirty years old, Lord Tennyson paid him a visit; and a maid who had been many years in the Sullivans' service was much struck by his brigand-like appearance. "Was that really the great poet, Master Arthur?" she inquired. "Well, he *do* wear clothes." Sullivan assured her that poets generally did; besides, Tennyson was Poet Laureate. "What a queer uniform!" was her next remark, prompted by the belief that the slouch hat and cape Tennyson usually wore formed the regular equipment of a Laureate.

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VICE-ADMIRAL DUCKWORTH-KING, who died a short time back, served during the Crimean War when he was a boy in the *Rodney* and the *Royal Albert*. Soon after, he was in the China War, and was a middy in the *Surprise* at the blockade of the Canton River and the bombardment and capture of Canton. He carried the colours of the landing party at the capture of the Peiho forts, and took part in a desperate encounter with pirates, in which twenty-five war-junks were destroyed. He was thus, while still a youth, the wearer of several medals.

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DR. NEWMAN HALL was once driving over the Simplon Pass, when his coachman told him that, as a small boy, he had led the mule of Napoleon. At that time the road was on the other side of the gorge, and, where the road now is, there was a rocky spur descending perpendicularly to the river, with a tremendous torrent falling over it, and preventing any chance of passing. "Boy," said Napoleon, "did you ever see a carriage go along that side?" "Never," said the boy. "It can't." Well," replied Napoleon, "one day you shall see a carriage and four horses go along there." The thing which seemed impossible then is easy now, for the torrent has been bridged, and the rock tunnelled.

***All About Dr. Leyds.***

AN interesting account of DR. LEYDS and his career appears in This Week's issue of CASSELL'S SATURDAY JOURNAL under the title of "Representing the Boer in Europe." The article is accompanied with a Portrait. Among many notable contributions the same number includes:—"Bits of Empire we have Given Up"; "Privileges that Regiments Possess"; "Actors Engaged by the Day"; "Through Life Without Thinking"; "Tommy's' Risk of Death or Wounds"; "'Armour' Worn in Mimic Battles" (with Five Illustrations); and Two Complete Stories. A further instalment is also given of GERTRUDE WARDEN'S powerful serial, "A SYNDICATE OF SINNERS," which, it is announced, will be followed in a fortnight's time by a Modern Story of Love and Adventure by HUAN MEE, entitled "A WEB OF TREACHERY." 212 Cycling Insurance Claims, including Four for £100 each, have now been paid. Weekly, price 1d. CASSELL AND COMPANY, LIMITED; and all Booksellers.

### Quite True.

SEEING that his audience were getting sleepy on one occasion, a very popular lecturer paused in his discourse on the civilising forces of the world, and proceeded as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, you have no idea of the sufferings of missionaries in Central America, on account of the enormous mosquitoes. A great many of them would weigh a pound, and they will get on logs and bark when the missionaries are passing."

By this time all ears and eyes were open, and he proceeded to finish his discourse. The next day one of his audience called upon him to account for his statements.

"But I didn't say one of them would weigh a pound," he protested; "I said a great many, and I think a million of them would."

"But you said they barked at the missionaries."

"No, brother—I said they would get on logs and bark."

## INSIDE THE CAVALIER'S ATTIC.

### A Bad Ten Minutes and—Afterwards.

"IS your father the captain at home, Master Percy?" asked the queer-looking man with the little hand-bag.

"No, he's not. Er—who are you?"

"Who am I? Well, well, just think of it! Not know me, after all these years!"

The man laughed oddly. Percy Hindley glanced at his chum Halliday, who was fishing in the moat, and who seemed to share his surprise.

"Do you belong to these parts?" said Percy, with just a little pity in his voice, for there was something plaintive in the man's wild eyes and unkempt hair. His clothes, too, indicated that he was poor.

"You've grown a fine young gentleman, Master Percy," continued the man, heedless of the question. "You'll be as fine a man as your father the captain some day, I can see. Perhaps old Grant is in?"

"No, he's not, either. He's gone up to the village. Do you—er—want money?"

Percy said this with an honourable blush. It went to his heart to realise that he had no money just then. But he was instantly relieved.

The man's eyes flashed like an opal.

"No, I don't want money. I want better than money. And you can help me, young gentleman I want to see Cavalier's Attic; and, as neither your brave father the captain nor yet old Grant is in, perhaps it wouldn't be asking too much if you'd show it me yourself. I've come a good step to the Grange."

This said, the man wiped his forehead with his sleeve. It wasn't very hot weather, but he perspired as if it were. He also turned and peeped into the dark, slimy water of the moat.

Rupert Halliday winked at Percy. It was just as if he had said: "Do you think he's 'all there'?"

But Percy had made up his mind.

"Oh, that's all right," he said. "I suppose you're an artist or something. I'll fetch the key, and we'll go up by the tower door. Half a minute, Rupe."

With that he ran round to the hall entrance, where the Hindley arms were chiselled assumingly on a stone escutcheon over the portal.

The man made one remark to Rupert while Percy was away, and only one. But it was a strange one.

"Apple of his dear father's eye, I'll be sworn; eh?"

"I expect we're most of us that, you know," said Rupert.

The other turned on him almost fiercely.

"I, too, had a son once," he cried; "and where is he now? Mouldering in a foreign land. And why? Why? I say. But here comes our dear Mr. Percy."

His excitement calmed down, and he smiled in a forced manner.

"Anything the matter?" asked Percy.

"Nothing, sir, nothing. I was only regretting once more that your honourable father the captain was not at home. You have the key, I perceive. It is very good of you."

"Mad as a hatter, poor beggar!" whispered Rupert, when the man again bent over the moat. But, mad or not, Percy meant him to see what he wanted to see.

The stone door was opened, and, Percy leading, the three ascended the stairs. These were dark and worn, and it was a relief to them all (especially to the man, who seemed short of breath) when they got to the top, and, in moderate daylight, entered the room in which, two hundred and fifty years ago, Sir Peter Halliburton had enjoyed safe, if close, quarters in hiding from Cromwell's men.

"Here we are!" said Percy. "There's nothing to see, you see, except the view."

The man's eyes turned sharply to the door. Though this was open, it had a key to it, and the key was on the inside.

"It is a beautiful room," the man said nervously. "The ladder there goes——"

"Oh, yes. It's a way on to the roof, but there are too many gables and gutters and things to make it any good scrambling outside," Percy explained.

"Suppose," said the man, "we shut ourselves up and get snug. But perhaps the key is rusty and will not turn?"

"I expect it will. See!"

"And the lid up there—I am so fond of ladders." The man went up the five or six rungs of the ladder, pushed the trap at the top, and looked out. Then he returned, nor noticed at all the expression on Rupert's face, which was part pity and part amusement.

"Humour him, old chap!" Rupert had whispered.

But now, with astounding quickness, this stranger turned the tables on both boys. With great suddenness, he drew the key from the locked door and tossed it through the barred, glassless window, and then, with a chuckle, he bolted up the ladder again and climbed out on to the roof.

II.

"By Jove! This is past a joke!" cried Percy. "How are we going to get out—these hours to come?"

The man looked down at them from above and laughed weirdly.

"Look at that bag, Mr. Percy, son of the dear captain," he said. He had left the thing on the floor.

"You've done a jolly soft trick!" said Percy indignantly.

"Soft! Oh, that is nothing. Listen. I will tell you. In ten minutes it will burst, and—the dear captain will suffer more than if it had blown him up himself. Listen again. I have touched its spring. You hear it tick. In ten minutes it will go off."

They did distinctly hear a ticking sound from the bag.

Rupert seized the thing to throw it through the window, but it was too wide for that.

Then he put it down gently, and the boys looked at each other.

"I say, you're joking?" Rupert asked, rather faintly.

But, for answer, the man up above dropped the trap and danced upon it.

"Rupert," said Percy (his face had gone very white), "that fellow must be mad Barker that I've told you about. He swore long ago to revenge himself on my father, and—he looks like doing it."

Two minutes had passed, and the tattoo of feet over their heads continued. Rupert asked the question. His chum had hastily reminded him of the history of mad Barker. Long ago butler at the Grange, his only son had enlisted in Captain Hindley's regiment and died in action in South Africa. The loss had little by little turned his brain. He had to leave the Grange, and it was then, in spite of the pension allowed him, that he conceived the intense belief that his late master had put his son in the front of the battle on purpose to be shot. Once this idea rooted in him, the idea of exacting blood for blood had also come to him. He had written many threatening letters to the captain.

And now, it seemed, he had taken action in stern earnest.

"Barker!" cried Percy. The ticking of that horrible bag seemed to go to the brain of the boys.

But Barker was dancing and singing.

They hammered on the door, though with no hope of any useful result. The noise attracted the notice of the madman. Lifting the top, he laughed down at them.

"It won't be long, now!" he exclaimed; and then, with a shout, "Put him where he hadn't a chance, did he? Where they couldn't have missed him if they'd tried? And now he lies by himself under that bare brown land they call the veldt! But we'll soon be even, Mr. Captain Hindley; and where'll *you* be when you've only some *bits* of a son to pick up?"

Down dropped the trap, before Rupert could rush up a couple of the ladder's steps.

"This," said Percy, "is perfectly horrible. The only hope is that he hasn't really been able to make a concern that'll go off."

It was just as if Mad Barker guessed the kind of comfort they were trying. He looked down on them again.

"Don't make any mistake about it not doing it's work," he said. "Some say I'm crazy about my chemical messes, but there's nothing crazy about that. It'll make the whole Grange into a rubbish heap. In about three minutes, too."

Then he resumed his caperings.

Percy pushed the bag into a corner where the wall had weathered and partly fallen in, and covered it with the *débris*.

"It *might* deaden it, you know. And now we must try and rush him off."

But Rupert obtained this post of honour. He had heavier shoulders, and, as he explained, much might depend on the extra pounds of force.

They waited only until the capering ceased.

Then, with a fierce, abrupt jerk, Rupert got the trap open.

"Come on!" he yelled, as he threw himself into the gap so that it could not be shut again.

But he hung, half stunned with fresh horror, as he saw Mad Barker reel in the effort to keep his balance, and then, with a shriek, topple from the narrow ledge and crash among the ivy towards the moat.

"We can't help that. We've got ourselves to look after," said Percy, as he followed his chum.

III.

Rupert was on his hands and knees where he had crawled to the base of a chimney stack. The daws, having already croaked themselves hoarse about the disturbance of their peace, now began to be more angry than before.

Percy had dropped the trap behind him. It seemed a needless precaution, and so he thought as he viewed their situation.

But now there was a muffled bang, a shaking and quaking all around them, and an instant later they were enveloped in a cloud of dust and smoke.

Then there was a stampede for the tallest ladder of the farm adjacent.

The servant who was left with poor Barker made his report on him.

"He seems kind o' dazed, sir, but he breathes fine."

And he was breathing better still when at length the ladder was brought, and both boys, after a ticklish minute or two in getting towards it, reached the dear, firm ground.

Now it was that *they* also began to pick up the little bits of things already mentioned. Barker had been carried into the servants' hall and a doctor sent for. There was no reason whatever, since they had recovered their nerve, that they should let these hundreds of old silver coins lie about the ground

When Captain Hindley came home to lunch, he was profoundly interested in the news that was waiting for him.

Barker had been taken off to the county lunatic asylum. The damaged part of the cavalier's wing of the Grange and the eight hundred odd crowns and shillings of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. had in a measure to tell their own tale, with such aid as Percy and Rupert could add.

The whole of the one side of the upper part of the wing had been blown out.

"My lads, you have had a merciful escape," said the captain gravely, after a thorough survey of the disaster.

So they thought.

As for the money, it was no doubt Sir Peter Halliburton's little legacy in payment for the board and lodging the Grange had yielded him. Though a little late in the day, it was accepted as such.

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The following bill was recently presented by a provincial veterinary surgeon: "To curing your pony that died yesterday, £1 1s."

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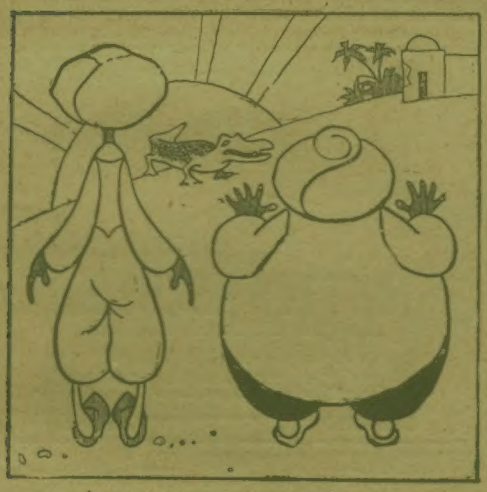
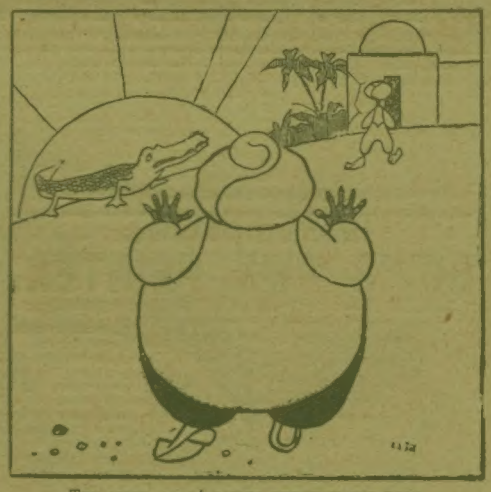
## Moral: Don't Get Stout.



A crocodile on feeding bent
Beheld two meals by fortune sent.



The first, alas! passed through the door
No matter, though, he was so poor.

"We're done for!" Percy gasped.

Rupert held tight to the ivy, as if he meant to take something with him in the final ruin.

When the air cleared a little, both boys peered below past the ivy. They could hear voices. That was a comfort, quite as keen as the realisation that only a small part of the Grange had suffered in the explosion.

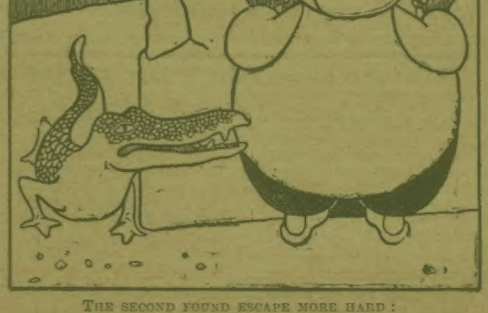
Three or four of the servants had run out. They were assembled at the base of the old part of the building, picking up little bits of things and staring upwards alternately.

"Hi, Christopher!" shouted Percy to one of them.

But a sudden distraction made the servants all turn to the moat, and the man Christopher was seen to jump into it and tug to the side the body of their dreadful acquaintance, the man with the bag. He did not seem to be dead, either.

This time both boys shouted their loudest. Their situation was by no means a safe one. It seemed to them that at any moment they might lose their heads and fall on something harder than the thick water of the moat. They were heard now.

"Why, it's Master Percy!" Christopher exclaimed.



The second found escape more hard:
The narrow entrance his way barred.

So when the first man sought his mate,
Two shoes were all that told his fate.


# OUR PRIZE LIST.

## WHO WANTS A "CHUMS" BICYCLE?

### A Postcard May Win It For You.

### THREE OTHER SPLENDID OFFERS.

**Two Questions of Moment.** Are you telling ALL your Chums about the following Offers of Prizes? and, Are you, yourselves, taking part in the Competitions? Read once more the particulars.

**A Competition Deciding Itself.**

## *A "CHUMS" BICYCLE*

is to be awarded for a POSTCARD in the following Easy Competition *which decides itself*. Here are the names of THIRTY PLACES in SOUTH AFRICA, all of which have been identified with the Present War:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. *Aliwal North* | 11. *Dundee* | 21. *Ladysmith* |
| 2. *Belmont* | 12. *Durban* | 22. *Lourenço Marques* |
| 3. *Bethulie* | 13. *Elandslaagte* | 23. *Mafeking* |
| 4. *Bloemfontein* | 14. *Estcourt* | 24. *Modderfontein* |
| 5. *Cape Town* | 15. *Frere* | 25. *Norvals Pont* |
| 6. *Chieveley* | 16. *Glencoe* | 26. *Paardeberg* |
| 7. *Colenso* | 17. *Grass Pan* | 27. *Pietermaritzburg* |
| 8. *Colesberg* | 18. *Johannesburg* | 28. *Pretoria* |
| 9. *De Aar* | 19. *Kimberley* | 29. *Spion Kop* |
| 10. *Dordrecht* | 20. *Kroonstad* | 30. *Stormberg* |

What I want you to do is to send to me a postcard, naming on it, *in the order here given*, the FIFTEEN PLACES, selected from the above list, which you would like to visit after the War is over. The Bicycle will be given according to the voting of Competitors. To the reader whose selection of Places most nearly corresponds to the selection of the majority of competitors, as shown by their lists, I shall give

### A Magnificent Bicycle,

with pneumatic tires and all the latest improvements. *Only One List of Places* can be received from each *competitor*; my decision as to the winner must be absolutely final; and I cannot enter into any correspondence whatever about the Competition. Lists of Places, on postcards, must reach me on or before **Wednesday, June 20th, 1900.**

[N.B.—The Machine—a "Gamage" Roadster—is fitted with Welch Dunlop Pneumatic Tires, beautifully enamelled, all parts detachable and dust-proof, ball bearings, metal parts nickel plated on copper, and will be supplied by A. W. Gamage, Limited, the well-known outfitters of Holborn, London.]

**Equally Simple.**

## *Five Powerful Telescopes*

are offered in the following Competition, which, like that for the Bicycle, *decides itself*. Here is a list of Fourteen Attractions of the April 18 No. of "CHUMS":—

1. *Anecdotes and Jokes.* 2. *Boys at the Post of Duty.* 3. *Elephant Against Crocodile.* 4. *Five Minutes with the Famous.* 5. *Fitterton's Costly Joke.* 6. *Fought Out at the Front.* 7. *Heading from a Balloon.* 8. *Humorous and Other Illustrations.* 9. *Jerry Dodds: Millionaire.* 10. *Our Prize List.* 11. *Our Puzzles.* 12. *Plate (in Colours): "Retreat be Hanged!"* 13. *Sir Henry Stanley's Trophies from the "Dark Continent."* 14. *The Editor to his Chums.*

I want you to write on a *postcard* this List of Attractions, *in the order which you prefer them*. The Prizes will be given according to the voting of the Competitors. To the Five readers whose arrangement of the Fourteen Attractions most nearly corresponds to the arrangement of the majority of Competitors, as shown by their lists, I shall award the Telescopes. These, it may be mentioned, are very handsome and powerful, fitted with brass draw-tubes, and made by Mr. E. G. Wood, Optician, Queen Street, Cheapside, London. Your postcards must reach me on or before **Wednesday, May 23rd, 1900.**

**Full Particulars** of the Offers of

## *Six Handsome Silver Watches*

will be found on p. 587, while Particulars of a UNION JACK Competition, in which **Four "Chums" Cricket Bats or Four Gold-mounted Fountain Pens** are to be awarded, appeared in the two previous issues of "CHUMS."

P.S.—All readers of "CHUMS" can take part in our Competitions, subject to the conditions indicated: my decision as to the winners must be regarded as final: and I cannot enter into any correspondence about the Competitions. All postcards are to be addressed to the "Prize Editor, 'CHUMS,' La Belle Sauvage.

## *OUR PRIZE LIST (continued).*

Lugate Hill, London E.C." In each of the Competitions referred to, it is my pleasure, I shall be happy to add to my original offers a number of **"Chums" Bronze Medals** and **"Chums" Certificates of Merit** as **Consolation Prizes.**

—PRIZE EDITOR.

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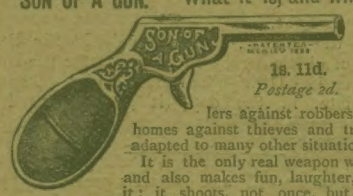


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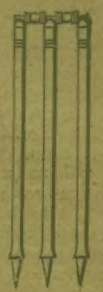

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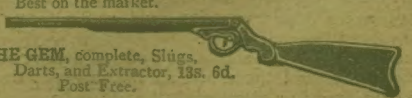

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